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Bride of Abidos. F. Rosmäsler jun 1820.

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THE
WORKS
OF
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
LORD BYRON.

VOL. IX.
THE VAMPIRE. MAZEPPA.

ZWICKAU,
PRINTED FOR BROTHERS SCHUMANN.

1820.

E X T R A C T
OF A
LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

EXTRACT

OF A

LETTER TO THE EDITOR


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EXTRACT OF A LETTER  
FROM GENEVA.

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“I breathe freely in the neighbourhood of this lake; the ground upon which I tread has been subdued from the earliest ages; the principal objects which immediately strike my eye, bring to my recollection scenes, in which man acted the hero and was the chief object of interest. Not to look back to earlier times of battles and sieges, here is the bust of Rousseau — here is a house with an inscription denoting that the Genevan philosopher first drew breath under its roof. A little out of the town is Ferney, the residence of Voltaire; where that wonderful, though certainly in many respects contemptible, character, received, like the hermits of old, the



### VIII *Extract of a Letter from Geneva.*

visits of pilgrims, not only from his own nation, but from the farthest boundaries of Europe. Here too is Bonnet's abode, and, a few steps beyond, the house of that astonishing woman Madame de Stael: perhaps the first of her sex, who has really proved its often claimed equality with the nobler man. We have before had women who have written interesting novels and poems, in which their tact at observing drawing-room characters has availed them; but never since the days of Heloise have those faculties which are peculiar to man, been developed as the possible inheritance of woman. Though even here, as in the case of Heloise, our sex have not been backward in alledging the existence of an Abeilard in the person of M. Schlegel as the inspirer of her works. But to proceed: upon the same side of the lake, Gibbon, Bonnivard, Bradshaw, and others mark, as it were, the stages for our progress; whilst upon the other side there is one house, built by Diodati, the friend of Milton,



which has contained within its walls, for several months, that poet whom we have so often read together, and who — if human passions remain the same, and human feelings, like chords, on being swept by nature's impulses shall vibrate as before — will be placed by posterity in the first rank of our English Poets. You must have heard, or the Third Canto of Childe Harold will have informed you, that Lord Byron resided many months in this neighbourhood. I went with some friends a few days ago, after having seen Ferney, to view this mansion. I trod the floors with the same feelings of awe and respect as we did, together, those of Shakspeare's dwelling at Stratford. I sat down in a chair of the saloon, and satisfied myself that I was resting on what he had made his constant seat. I found a servant there who had lived with him; she, however, gave me but little information. She pointed out his bed-chamber upon the same level as the saloon and dining-room, and inform-



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ed me that he retired to rest at three, got up at two, and employed himself a long time over his toilette; that he never went to sleep without a pair of pistols and a dagger by his side, and that he never eat animal food. He apparently spent some part of every day upon the lake in an English boat. There is a balcony from the saloon which looks upon the lake and the mountain Jura; and I imagine, that it must have been hence he contemplated the storm so magnificently described in the Third Canto; for you have from here a most extensive view of all the points he has therein depicted. I can fancy him like the scathed pine, whilst all around was sunk to repose, still waking to observe, what gave but a weak image of the storms which had desolated his own breast.

The sky is changed! — and such a change;  
Oh, night!

And storm and darkness, ye are wond'rous  
strong,







## XII *Extract of a Letter from Geneva.*

Which blighted their life's bloom, and then  
departed —

Itself expired, but leaving them an age  
Of years all winter — war within themselves  
to wage.

I went down to the little port, if I may use the expression, wherein his vessel used to lay, and conversed with the cottager, who had the care of it. You may smile, but I have my pleasure in thus helping my personification of the individual I admire, by attaining to the knowledge of those circumstances which were daily around him. I have made numerous enquiries in the town concerning him, but can learn nothing. He only went into society there once, when M. Pictet took him to the house of a lady to spend the evening. They say he is a very singular man, and seem to think him very uncivil. Amongst other things they relate, that having invited M. Pictet and Bonstetten to dinner, he went on the lake to Chillon, leaving a gentleman who travelled with him to receive



them and make his apologies. Another evening, being invited to the house of Lady D— H—, he promised to attend, but upon approaching the windows of her ladyship's villa, and perceiving the room to be full of company, he set down his friend, desiring him to plead his excuse, and immediately returned home. This will serve as a contradiction to the report which you tell me is current in England, of his having been avoided by his countrymen on the continent. The case happens to be directly the reverse, as he has been generally sought by them, though on most occasions, apparently without success. It is said, indeed, that upon paying his first visit at Coppet, following the servant who had announced his name, he was surprised to meet a lady carried out fainting; but before he had been seated many minutes, the same lady, who had been so affected at the sound of his name, returned and conversed with him a considerable time — such is female curiosity



#### XIV *Extract of a Letter from Geneva.*

and affectation! He visited Coppet frequently, and of course associated there with several of his countrymen, who evinced no reluctance to meet him whom his enemies alone would represent as an outcast.

Though I have been so unsuccessful in this town, I have been more fortunate in my enquiries elsewhere. There is a society three or four miles from Geneva, the centre of which is the Countess of Breuss, a Russian lady, well acquainted with the *agrémens de la Société*, and who has collected them round herself at her mansion. It was chiefly here, I find, that the gentleman who travelled with Lord Byron, as physician, sought for society. He used almost every day to cross the lake by himself, in one of their flat-bottomed boats, and return after passing the evening with his friends, about eleven or twelve at night, often whilst the storms were raging in the circling summits of the mountains around. As he became intimate, from long



acquaintance, with several of the families in this neighbourhood, I have gathered from their accounts some excellent traits of his lordship's character, which I will relate to you at some future opportunity.

Among other particulars mentioned, was the outline of a ghost story by Lord Byron. It appears that one evening Lord B., Mr. P. B. Shelly, two ladies and the gentleman before alluded to, after having perused a German work, entitled *Phantasmagoriana*, began relating ghost stories; when his lordship having recited the beginning of *Christabel*, then unpublished, the whole took so strong a hold of Mr. Shelly's mind, that he suddenly started up and ran out of the room. The physician and Lord Byron followed, and discovered him leaning against a mantle-piece, with cold drops of perspiration trickling down his face. After having given him something to refresh him, upon enquiring into the cause of his alarm, they found that his wild imagination



XVI *Extract of a Letter from Geneva.*

having pictured to him the bosom of one of the ladies with eyes (which was reported of a lady in the neighbourhood where he lived) he was obliged to leave the room in order to destroy the impression. It was afterwards proposed, in the course of conversation, that each of the company present should write a tale depending upon some supernatural agency, which was undertaken by Lord B., the physician, and one of the ladies before mentioned. I obtained the outline of each of these stories as a great favour, and herewith forward them to you, as I was assured you would feel as much curiosity as myself, to peruse the *ebauches* of so great a genius, and those immediately under his influence."

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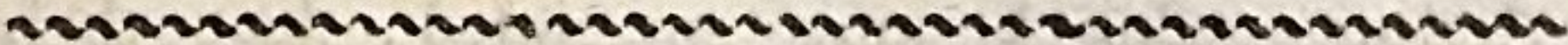


# THE VAMPIRE.



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## INTRODUCTION.

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THE superstition upon which this tale is founded is very general in the East. Among the Arabians it appears to be common: it did not, however, extend itself to the Greeks until after the establishment of Christianity; and it has only assumed its present form since the division of the Latin and Greek churches; at which time, the idea becoming prevalent, that a Latin body could not corrupt if buried in their territory, it gradually increased, and formed the subject of many wonderful stories, still extant, of the dead rising from their graves, and feeding upon the blood of the young and beautiful. In the West it spread, with some slight variation, all over Hungary, Poland, Austria, and Lorraine, where the belief existed, that vampyres nightly imbibed a certain portion of the blood of their



victims, who became emaciated, lost their strength, and speedily died of consumptions; whilst these human blood-suckers fattened — and their veins became distended to such a state of repletion, as to cause the blood to flow from all the passages of their bodies, and even from the very pores of their skins.

In the London Journal, of March, 1732, is a curious, and, of course, *credible* account of a particular case of vampyrism, which is stated to have occurred at Madreyga, in Hungary. It appears, that upon an examination of the commander-in-chief and magistrates of the place, they positively and unanimously affirmed, that, about five years before, a certain Heyduke, named Arnold Paul, had been heard to say, that, at Cassovia, on the frontiers of the Turkish Servia, he had been tormented by a vampyre, but had found a way to rid himself of the evil, by eating some of the earth out of the vampyre's grave, and rubbing himself with his blood. This precaution, however, did not prevent him from becoming a vampyre\*) himself; for, about twenty or thirty days after his death.

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\*) The universal belief is, that a person sucked by a vampyre becomes a vampyre himself, and sucks in his turn.



and burial, many persons complained of having been tormented by him, and a deposition was made, that four persons had been deprived of life by his attacks. To prevent further mischief, the inhabitants having consulted their Hadagni,\* ) took up the body, and found it (as is supposed to be usual in cases of vampyrism) fresh, and entirely free from corruption, and emitting at the mouth, nose, and ears, pure and florid blood. Proof having been thus obtained, they resorted to the accustomed remedy. A stake was driven entirely through the heart and body of Arnold Paul, at which he is reported to have cried out as dreadfully as if he had been alive. This done, they cut off his head, burned his body, and threw the ashes into his grave. The same measures were adopted with the corpses of those persons who had previously died from vampyrism, lest they should, in their turn, become agents upon others who survived them.

This monstrous rodomontade is here related, because it seems better adapted to illustrate the subject of the present observations than any other instance which could be adduced. In many parts of Greece it is considered as a sort of punishment after death, for some heinous crime

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\* ) Chief bailiff.



committed whilst in existence, that the deceased is not only doomed to vampyrise, but compelled to confine his infernal visitations solely to those beings he loved most while upon earth — those to whom he was bound by ties of kindred and affection. — A supposition alluded to in the «Giaour.»

But first on earth, as Vampyre sent,  
Thy corse shall from its tomb be rent;  
Then ghastly haunt the native place,  
And suck the blood of all thy race;  
There from thy *daughter, sister, wife,*  
At midnight drain the stream of life;  
*Yet loathe the banquet which perforce*  
Must feed thy livid living corse,  
Thy victims, ere they yet expire,  
Shall know the demon for their sire;  
As cursing thee, thou cursing them,  
Thy flowers are withered on the stem.  
But one that for *thy crime* must fall,  
The youngest, best beloved of all,  
Shall bless thee with a *father's* name —  
That word shall wrap thy heart in flame!  
Yet thou must end thy task and mark  
Her cheek's last tinge — her eye's last spark,  
And the last glassy glance must view  
Which freezes o'er its lifeless blue;  
Then with unhallowed hand shall tear



The tresses of her yellow hair,  
Of which, in life a lock when shorn  
Affection's fondest pledge was worn —  
But now is borne away by thee  
Memorial of thine agony!  
Yet with thine own best blood shall drip;  
Thy gnashing tooth, and haggard lip;  
Then stalking to thy sullen grave,  
Go — and with Gouls and Afrits rave,  
Till these in horror shrink away  
From spectre more accursed than they.

Mr. Southey has also introduced in his wild but beautiful poem of "Thalaba," the vampyre corse of the Arabian maid Oneiza, who is represented as having returned from the grave for the purpose of tormenting him she best loved whilst in existence. But this cannot be supposed to have resulted from the sinfulness of her life, she being portrayed throughout the whole of the tale as a complete type of purity and innocence. The veracious Tournesfort gives a long account in his travels of several astonishing cases of vampyrism, to which he pretends to have been an eyewitness; and Calmet, in his great work upon this subject, besides a variety of anecdotes, and traditionary narratives illustrative of its effects, has put forth some learned dis-



sertations, tending to prove it to be a classical, as well as barbarian error.

Many curious and interesting notices on this singularly horrible superstition might be added; though the present may suffice for the limits of a note, necessarily devoted to explanation, and which may now be concluded by merely remarking, that though the term Vampyre is the one in most general acceptation, there are several others synonymous with it, made use of in various parts of the world: as Vroucolocha, Vardoulacha, Goul, Broucoloka, etc.

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## THE VAMPIRE.

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It happened that in the midst of the dissipation attendant upon a London winter, there appeared at the various parties of the leaders of the *ton* a nobleman, more remarkable for his singularities, than his rank. He gazed upon the mirth around him, as if he could not participate therein. Apparently, the light laughter of the fair only attracted his attention, that he might by a look quell it, and throw fear into those breasts where thoughtlessness reigned. Those who felt this sensation of awe, could not explain whence it arose: some attributed it to the dead grey eye, which, fixing upon the object's face, did not seem to penetrate, and at one glance to pierce through to the inward workings of the heart; but fell upon the cheek with a leaden ray that weighed upon the skin it could not pass. His peculiarities caused him to be



invited to every house; all wished to see him, and those who had been accustomed to violent excitement, and now felt the weight of *ennui*, were pleased at having something in their presence capable of engaging their attention. In spite of the deadly hue of his face, which never gained a warmer tint, either from the blush of modesty, or from the strong emotion of passion, though its form and outline were beautiful, many of the female hunters after notoriety attempted to win his attentions, and gain, at least, some marks of what they might term affection: Lady Mercer, who had been the mockery of every monster shewn in drawing-rooms since her marriage, threw herself in his way, and did all but put on the dress of a mountebank, to attract his notice: — though in vain: — when she stood before him, though his eyes were apparently fixed upon her's, still it seemed as if they were unperceived; — even her unappalled impudence was baffled, and she left the field. But though the common adulteress could not influence even the guidance of his eyes, it was not that the female sex was indifferent to him: yet such was the apparent caution with which he spoke to the virtuous wife and innocent daughter, that few knew he ever addressed himself to females. He had, however, the reputation of a winning tongue; and whether it was



that it even overcame the dread of his singular character, or that they were moved by his apparent hatred of vice, he was as often among those females who form the boast of their sex from their domestic virtues, as among those who sully it by their vices.

About the same time, there came to London a young gentleman of the name of Aubrey: he was an orphan left with an only sister in the possession of great wealth, by parents who died while he was yet in childhood. Left also to himself by guardians, who thought it their duty merely to take care of his fortune, while they relinquished the more important charge of his mind to the care of mercenary subalterns, he cultivated more his imagination than his judgment. He had, hence, that high romantic feeling of honour and candour, which daily ruins so many milliners' apprentices. He believed all to sympathise with virtue, and thought that vice was thrown in by Providence merely for the picturesque effect of the scene, as we see in romances: he thought that the misery of a cottage merely consisted in the vesting of clothes, which were as warm, but which were better adapted to the painter's eye by their irregular folds and various coloured patches. He thought, in fine, that the dreams of poets were the realities of life. He was handsome, frank, and



rich: for these reasons, upon his entering into the gay circles, many mothers surrounded him, striving which should describe with least truth their languishing or romping favourites: the daughters at the same time, by their brightening countenances when he approached, and by their sparkling eyes, when he opened his lips, soon led him into false notions of his talents and his merit. Attached as he was to the romance of his solitary hours, he was startled at finding, that, except in the tallow and wax candles that flickered, not from the presence of a ghost, but from want of snuffing, there was no foundation in real life for any of that congeries of pleasing pictures and descriptions contained in those volumes, from which he had formed his study. Finding, however, some compensation in his gratified vanity, he was about to relinquish his dreams, when the extraordinary being we have above described, crossed him in his career.

He watched him; and the very impossibility of forming an idea of the character of a man entirely absorbed in himself, who gave few other signs of his observation of external objects, than the tacit assent to their existence, implied by the avoidance of their contact: allowing his imagination to picture every thing that flattered its propensity to extravagant ideas, he soon form-



ed this object into the hero of a romance, and determined to observe the offspring of his fancy, rather than the person before him. He became acquainted with him, paid him attentions, and so far advanced upon his notice, that his presence was always recognised. He gradually learnt that Lord Ruthven's affairs were embarrassed, and soon found, from the notes of preparation in — — Street, that he was about to travel. Desirous of gaining some information respecting this singular character, who, till now, had only whetted his curiosity, he hinted to his guardians, that it was time for him to perform the tour, which for many generations has been thought necessary to enable the young to take some rapid steps in the career of vice towards putting themselves upon an equality with the aged, and not allowing them to appear as if fallen from the skies, whenever scandalous intrigues are mentioned as the subjects of pleasantries or of praise, according to the degree of skill shewn in carrying them on. They consented: and Aubrey immediately mentioning his intentions to Lord Ruthven, was surprised to receive from him a proposal to join him. Flattered by such a mark of esteem from him, who, apparently, had nothing in common with other men, he gladly accepted it, and in a few days they had passed the circling waters.



Hitherto, Aubrey had had no opportunity of studying Lord Ruthven's character, and now he found, that, though many more of his actions were exposed to his view, the results offered different conclusions from the apparent motives to his conduct. His companion was profuse in his liberality; — the idle, the vagabond, and the beggar, received from his hand more than enough to relieve their immediate wants. But Aubrey could not avoid remarking, that it was not upon the virtuous, reduced to indigence by the misfortunes attendant even upon virtue, that he bestowed his alms; — these were sent from the door with hardly suppressed sneers; but when the profligate came to ask something, not to relieve his wants, but to allow him to wallow in his lust, or to sink him still deeper in his iniquity, he was sent away with rich charity. This was, however, attributed by him to the greater importunity of the vicious, which generally prevails over the retiring bashfulness of the virtuous indigent. There was one circumstance about the charity of his Lordship, which was still more impressed upon his mind: all those upon whom it was bestowed, inevitably found that there was a curse upon it, for they were all either led to the scaffold, or sunk to the lowest and the most abject misery. At Brussels and other towns through which they



passed, Aubrey was surprized at the apparent eagerness with which his companion sought for the centres of all fashionable vice; there he entered into all the spirit of the faro table: he betted, and always gambled with success, except where the known sharper was his antagonist, and then he lost even more than he gained; but it was always with the same unchanging face, with which he generally watched the society around: it was not, however, so when he encountered the rash youthful novice, or the luckless father of a numerous family; then his very wish seemed fortune's law — this apparent abstractedness of mind was laid aside, and his eyes sparkled with more fire than that of the cat whilst dallying with the half-dead mouse. In every town, he left the formerly affluent youth, torn from the circle he adorned, cursing, in the solitude of a dungeon, the fate that had drawn him within the reach of this fiend; whilst many a father sat frantic, amidst the speaking looks of mute hungry children, without a single farthing of his late immense wealth, wherewith to buy even sufficient to satisfy their present craving. Yet he took no money from the gambling table; but immediately lost, to the ruiner of many, the last gilder he had just snatched from the convulsive grasp of the innocent: this might but be the result of a certain degree of



knowledge, which was not, however, capable of combating the cunning of the more experienced. Aubrey often wished to represent this to his friend, and beg him to resign that charity and pleasure which proved the ruin of all, and did not tend to his own profit; — but he delayed it — for each day he hoped his friend would give him some opportunity of speaking frankly and openly to him; however, this never occurred. Lord Ruthven in his carriage, and amidst the various wild and rich scenes of nature, was always the same: his eye spoke less than his lip; and though Aubrey was near the object of his curiosity, he obtained no greater gratification from it than the constant excitement of vainly wishing to break that mystery, which to his exalted imagination began to assume the appearance of something supernatural.

They soon arrived at Rome, and Aubrey for a time lost sight of his companion; he left him in daily attendance upon the morning circle of an Italian countess, whilst he went in search of the memorials of another almost deserted city. Whilst he was thus engaged, letters arrived from England, which he opened with eager impatience; the first was from his sister, breathing nothing but affection; the others were from his guardians, the latter astonished him; if it had before entered into his imagination that there



was an evil power resident in his companion, these seemed to give him most sufficient reason for the belief. His guardians insisted upon his immediately leaving his friend, and urged, that his character was dreadfully vicious, for that the possession of irresistible powers of seduction, rendered his licentious habits more dangerous to society. It had been discovered, that his contempt for the adultress had not originated in hatred of her character; but that he had required, to enhance his gratification, that his victim, the partner of his guilt, should be hurled from the pinnacle of unsullied virtue, down to the lowest abyss of infamy and degradation: in fine, that all those females whom he had sought, apparently on account of their virtue, had, since his departure, thrown even the mask aside, and has not scrupled to expose the whole deformity of their vices to the public gaze.

Aubrey determined upon leaving one, whose character had not yet shown a single bright point on which to rest the eye. He resolved to invent some plausible pretext for abandoning him altogether, purposing, in the mean while, to watch him more closely, and to let no slight circumstances pass by unnoticed. He entered into the same circle, and soon perceived, that his Lordship was endeavouring to work upon the inexperi-



ence of the daughter of the lady whose house he chiefly frequented. In Italy, it is seldom that an unmarried female is met with in society; he was therefore obliged to carry on his plans in secret; but Aubrey's eye followed him in all his windings, and soon discovered that an assignation had been appointed, which would most likely end in the ruin of an innocent, though thoughtless girl. Losing no time, he entered the apartment of Lord Ruthven, and abruptly asked him his intentions with respect to the lady, informing him at the same time that he was aware of his being about to meet her that very night. Lord Ruthven answered, that his intentions were such as he supposed all would have upon such an occasion; and upon being pressed whether he intended to marry her, merely laughed. Aubrey retired; and immediately writing a note, to say, that from that moment he must decline accompanying his Lordship in the remainder of their proposed tour, he ordered his servant to seek other apartments, and calling upon the mother of the lady, informed her of all he knew, not only with regard to her daughter, but also concerning the character of his Lordship. The assignation was prevented. Lord Ruthven next day merely sent his servant to notify his complete assent to a separation;



but did not hint any suspicion of his plans having been foiled by Aubrey's interposition.

Having left Rome, Aubrey directed his steps towards Greece, and crossing the Peninsula, soon found himself at Athens. He then fixed his residence in the house of a Greek; and soon occupied himself in tracing the faded records of ancient glory upon monuments that apparently, ashamed of chronicling the deeds of freemen only before slaves, had hidden themselves beneath the sheltering oil or many coloured lichen. Under the same roof as himself, existed a being, so beautiful and delicate, that she might have formed the model for a painter, wishing to pourtray on canvass the promised hope of the faithful in Mahomet's paradise, save that her eyes spoke too much mind for any one to think she could belong to those who had no souls. As she danced upon the plain, or tripped along the mountain's side, one would have thought the gazelle a poor type of her beauties; for who would have exchanged her eye, apparently the eye of animated nature, for that sleepy luxurious look of the animal suited but to the taste of an epicure. The light step of Ianthe often accompanied Aubrey in his search after antiquities, and often would the unconscious girl, engaged in the pursuit of a Kashmere butterfly, show the whole beauty of her form,



floating as it were upon the wind, to the eager gaze of him, who forgot the letters he had just decyphered upon an almost effaced tablet, in the contemplation of her sylph-like figure. Often would her tresses falling, as she flitted around, exhibit in the sun's ray such delicately brilliant and swiftly fading hues, as might well excuse the forgetfulness of the antiquary, who let escape from his mind the very object he had before thought of vital importance to the proper interpretation of a passage in Pausanias. But why attempt to describe charms which all feel, but none can appreciate? — It was innocence, youth, and beauty, unaffected by crowded drawing-rooms and stifling balls. Whils he drew those remains of which he wished to preserve a memorial for his future hours, she would stand by, and watch the magic effects of his pencil, in tracing the scenes of her native place; she would then describe to him the circling dance upon the open plain, would paint to him in all the glowing colours of youthful memory, the marriage pomp she remembered viewing in her infancy; and then, turning to subjects that had evidently made a greater impression upon her mind, would tell him all the supernatural tales of her nurse. Her earnestness and apparent belief of what she narrated, excited the interest even of Aubrey; and often as she told him the



- tale of the living vampyre, who had passed years amidst his friends, and dearest ties, forced every year, by feeding upon the life of a lovely female to prolong his existence for the ensuing months, his blood would run cold, whilst he attempted to laugh her out of such idle and horrible fantasies; but Ianthe cited to him the names of old men, who had at last detected one living among themselves, after several of their near relatives and children had been found marked with the stamp of the fiend's appetite; and when she found him so incredulous, she begged of him to believe her, for it had been remarked, that those who had dared to question their existence, always had some proof given, which obliged them, with grief and heart-breaking, to confess it was true. She detailed to him the traditional appearance of these monsters and his horror was increased, by hearing a pretty accurate description of Lord Ruthven; he, however, still persisted in persuading her, that there could be no truth in her fears, though at the same time he wondered at the many coincidences which had all tended to excite a belief in the supernatural power of Lord Ruthven.

Aubrey began to attach himself more and more to Ianthe; her innocence, so contrasted with all the affected virtues of the women among whom he had sought for his vision of romance,



won his heart; and while he ridiculed the idea of a young man of English habits, marrying an uneducated Greek girl, still he found himself more and more attached to the almost fairy form before him. He would tear himself at times from her, and, forming a plan for some antiquarian research, he would depart, determined not to return until his object was attained; but he always found it impossible to fix his attention upon the ruins around him, whilst in his mind he retained an image that seemed alone the rightful possessor of his thoughts. Ianthe was unconscious of his love, and was ever the same frank infantile being he had first known. She always seemed to part from him with reluctance; but it was because she had no longer any one with whom she could visit her favourite haunts, whilst her guardian was occupied in sketching or uncovering some fragment which had yet escaped the destructive hand of time. She had appealed to her parents on the subject of Vampyres, and they both, with several present, affirmed their existence, pale with horror at the very name. Soon after, Aubrey determined to proceed upon one of his excursions, which was to detain him for a few hours; when they heard the name of the place, they all at once begged of him not to return at night, as he must necessarily pass through a wood, where no Greek



would ever remain, after the day had closed, upon any consideration. They described it as the resort of the vampyres in their nocturnal orgies, and denounced the most heavy evils as impending upon him who dared to cross their path. Aubrey made light of their representations, and tried to laugh them out of the idea; but when he saw them shudder at his daring thus to mock a superior, infernal power, the very name of which apparently made their blood freeze, he was silent.

Next morning Aubrey set off upon his excursion unattended; he was surprised to observe the melancholy face of his host, and was concerned to find that his words, mocking the belief of those horrible fiends, had inspired them with such terror. When he was about to depart, Ianthe came to the side of his horse, and earnestly begged of him to return, ere nigh allowed the power of these beings to be put in action; — he promised. He was, however, so occupied in his research, that he did not perceive that day-light would soon end, and that in the horizon there was one of those specks which, in the warmer climates, so rapidly gather into a tremendous mass, and pour all their rage upon the devoted country. — He at last, however, mounted his horse, determined to make up by speed for his delay: but it was too late.



Twilight, in these southern climates, is almost unknown; immediately the sun sets, night begins: and ere he had advanced far, the power of the storm was above — its echoing thunders had scarcely an interval of rest — its thick heavy rain forced its way through the canopied foliage, whilst the blue forked lightning seemed to fall and radiate at his very feet. Suddenly his horse took fright, and he was carried with dreadful rapidity through the entangled forest. The animal at last, through fatigue, stopped, and he found, by the glare of lightning, that he was in the neighbourhood of a hovel that hardly lifted itself up from the masses of dead leaves and brushwood which surrounded it. Dismounting, he approached, hoping to find some one to guide him to the town, or at least trusting to obtain shelter from the pelting of the storm. As he approached, the thunders, for a moment silent, allowed him to hear the dreadful shrieks of a woman mingling with the stifled, exultant mockery of a laugh, continued in one almost unbroken sound; — he was startled: but, roused by the thunder which again rolled over his head, he, with a sudden effort, forced open the door of the hut. He found himself in utter darkness: the sound, however, guided him. He was apparently unperceived; for, though he called, still the sounds continued, and no



notice was taken of him. He found himself in contact with some one, whom he immediately seized; when a voice cried, "Again baffled!" to which a loud laugh succeeded; and he felt himself grappled by one whose strength seemed superhuman: determined to sell his life as dearly as he could, he struggled; but it was in vain: he was lifted from his feet and hurled with enormous force against the ground: — his enemy threw himself upon him, and kneeling upon his breast, had placed his hands upon his throat — when the glare of many torches penetrating through the hole that gave light in the day, disturbed him: — he instantly rose, and, leaving his prey, rushed through the door, and in a moment the crashing of the branches, as he broke through the wood, was no longer heard. The storm was now still; and Aubrey, incapable of moving, was soon heard by those without. They entered; the light of their torches fell upon the mud walls, and the thatch loaded on every individual straw with heavy flakes of soot. At the desire of Aubrey they searched for her who had attracted him by her cries; he was again left in darkness; but what was his horror, when the light of the torches once more burst upon him, to perceive the airy form of his fair conductress brought in a lifeless corse. He shut his eyes, hoping



that it was but a vision arising from his disturbed imagination; but he again saw the same form, when he unclosed them, stretched by his side. There was no colour upon her cheek, not even upon her lip; yet there was a stillness about her face that seemed almost as attaching as the life that once dwelt there: — upon her neck and breast was blood, and upon her throat were the marks of teeth having opened the vein: — to this the men pointed, crying, simultaneously struck with horror, «A Vampyre! a Vampyre!» A litter was quickly formed, and Aubrey was laid by the side of her who had lately been to him the object of so many bright and fairy visions, now fallen with the flower of life that had died within her. He knew not what his thoughts were — his mind was benumbed and seemed to shun reflection, and take refuge in vacancy — he held almost unconsciously in his hand a naked dagger of a particular construction, which had been found in the hut. They were soon met by different parties who had been engaged in the search of her whom a mother had missed. Their lamentable cries, as they approached the city, forewarned the parents of some dreadful catastrophe. — To describe their grief would be impossible; but when they ascertained the cause of their child's death, they looked at Aubrey, and pointed to the corse.



They were inconsolable; both died broken-hearted.

Aubrey being put to bed was seized with a most violent fever, and was often delirious; in these intervals he would call upon Lord Ruthven and upon Ianthe — by some unaccountable combination he seemed to beg of his former companion to spare the being he loved. At other times he would imprecate maledictions upon his head, and curse him as her destroyer. Lord Ruthven chanced at this time to arrive at Athens, and, from whatever motive, upon hearing of the state of Aubrey, immediately placed himself in the same house, and became his constant attendant. When the latter recovered from his delirium, he was horrified and startled at the sight of him whose image he had now combined with that of a Vampyre; but Lord Ruthven, by his kind words, implying almost repentance for the fault that had caused their separation, and still more by the attention, anxiety, and care which he showed, soon reconciled him to his presence. His lordship seemed quite changed; he no longer appeared that apathetic being who had so astonished Aubrey; but as soon as his convalescence began to be rapid, he again gradually retired into the same state of mind, and Aubrey perceived no difference from the former man, except that at times he



was surprised to meet his gaze fixed intently upon him, with a smile of malicious exultation playing upon his lips: he knew not why, but this smile haunted him. During the last stage of the invalid's recovery, Lord Ruthven was apparently engaged in watching the tideless waves raised by the cooling breeze, or in marking the progress of those orbs, circling, like our world, the moveless sun; — indeed, he appeared to wish to avoid the eyes of all.

Aubrey's mind, by this shock, was much weakened, and that elasticity of spirit which had once so distinguished him now seemed to have fled for ever. He was now as much a lover of solitude and silence as Lord Ruthven; but much as he wished for solitude, his mind could not find it in the neighbourhood of Athens; if he sought it amidst the ruins he had formerly frequented, Ianthe's form stood by his side — if he sought it in the woods, her light step would appear wandering amidst the underwood, in quest of the modest violet; then suddenly turning round, would show, to his wild imagination, her pale face and wounded throat, with a meek smile upon her lips. He determined to fly scenes, every feature of which created such bitter associations in his mind. He proposed to Lord Ruthven, to whom he held himself bound by the tender care he had taken of



him during his illness, that they should visit those parts of Greece neither had yet seen. They travelled in every direction, and sought every spot to which a recollection could be attached: but though they thus hastened from place to place, yet they seemed not to heed what they gazed upon. They heard much of robbers, but they gradually began to slight these reports, which they imagined were only the invention of individuals, whose interest it was to excite the generosity of those whom they defended from pretended dangers. In consequence of thus neglecting the advice of the inhabitants, on one occasion they travelled with only a few guards, more to serve as guides than as a defence. Upon entering, however, a narrow defile, at the bottom of which was the bed of a torrent, with large masses of rock brought down from the neighbouring precipices, they had reason to repent their negligence; for scarcely were the whole of the party engaged in the narrow pass, when they were startled by the whistling of bullets close to their heads, and by the echoed report of several guns. In an instant their guards had left them, and, placing themselves behind rocks, had begun to fire in the direction whence the report came. Lord Ruthven and Aubrey, imitating their example, retired for a moment behind the shelter-



ing turn of the defile: but ashamed of being thus detained by a foe, who with insulting shouts bade them advance, and being exposed to unresisting slaughter, if any of the robbers should climb above and take them in the rear, they determined at once to rush forward in search of the enemy. Hardly had they lost the shelter of the rock, when Lord Ruthven received a shot in the shoulder, which brought him to the ground. Aubrey hastened to his assistance; and, no longer heeding the contest or his own peril, was soon surprised by seeing the robbers' faces around him — his guards having, upon Lord Ruthven's being wounded, immediately thrown up their arms and surrendered.

By promises of great reward, Aubrey soon induced them to convey his wounded friend to a neighbouring cabin; and having agreed upon a ransom, he was no more disturbed by their presence — they being content merely to guard the entrance till their comrade should return with the promised sum, for which he had an order. Lord Ruthven's strength rapidly decreased; in two days mortification ensued, and death seemed advancing with hasty steps. His conduct and appearance had not changed; he seemed as unconscious of pain as he had been of the objects about him: but towards the close of the last evening, his mind became apparently



uneasy, and his eye often fixed upon Aubrey, who was induced to offer his assistance with more than usual earnestness — — “Assist me! you may save me — you may do more than that — I mean not my life, I heed the death of my existence as little as that of the passing day; but you may save my honour, your friend’s honour.” — “How? tell me how? I would do any thing,” replied Aubrey. — “I need but little — my life ebbs apace — I cannot explain the whole — but if you would conceal all you know of me, my honour were free from stain in the world’s mouth — and if my death were unknown for some time in England — I — I — but life ” — “It shall not be known ” — “Swear!” cried the dying man, raising himself with exultant violence, “Swear by all your soul reveres, by all your nature fears, swear that for a year and a day you will not impart your knowledge of my crimes or death to any living being in any way, whatever may happen, or whatever you may see.” — His eyes seemed bursting from their sockets: “I swear!” said Aubrey; he sunk laughing upon his pillow, and breathed no more.

Aubrey retired to rest, but did not sleep; the many circumstances attending his acquaintance with this man rose upon his mind, and he knew not why; when he remembered his oath a cold shivering came over him, as if from



the presentiment of something horrible awaiting him. Rising early in the morning, he was about to enter the hovel in which he had left the corpse, when a robber met him, and informed him that it was no longer there, having been conveyed by himself and comrades, upon his retiring, to the pinnacle of a neighbouring mount, according to a promise they had given his lordship, that it should be exposed to the first cold ray of the moon that rose after his death. Aubrey astonished, and taking several of the men, determined to go and bury it upon the spot where it lay. But, when he had mounted to the summit he found no trace of either the corpse or the clothes, though the robbers swore they pointed out the identical rock on which they had laid the body. For a time his mind was bewildered in conjectures, but he at last returned, convinced that they had buried the corpse for the sake of the clothes.

Wearied of a country in which he had met with such terrible misfortunes, and in which all apparently conspired to heighten that superstitious melancholy that had seized upon his mind, he resolved to leave it, and soon arrived at Smyrna. While waiting for a vessel to convey him to Otranto, or to Naples, he occupied himself in arranging those effects he had with him belonging to Lord Ruthven. Amongst other



things there was a case containing several weapons of offence, more or less adapted to ensure the death of the victim. There were several daggers and ataghans. Whilst turning them over, and examining their curious forms, what was his surprise at finding a sheath apparently ornamented in the same style as the dagger discovered in the fatal hut — he shuddered — hastening to gain further proof, he found the weapon, and his horror may be imagined when he discovered that it fitted, though peculiarly shaped, the sheath he held in his hand. His eyes seemed to need no further certainty — they seemed gazing to be bound to the dagger; yet still he wished to disbelieve; but the particular form, the same varying tints upon the haft and sheath were alike in splendour on both, and left no room for doubt; there were also drops of blood on each.

He left Smyrna, and on his way home, at Rome, his first inquiries were concerning the lady he had attempted to snatch from Lord Ruthven's seductive arts. Her parents were in distress, their fortune ruined, and she had not been heard of since the departure of his lordship. Aubrey's mind became almost broken under so many repeated horrors; he was afraid that this lady had fallen a victim to the destroyer



of Ianthe. He became morose and silent; and his only occupation consisted in urging the speed of the postilions, as if he were going to save the life of some one he held dear. He arrived at Calais; a breeze, which seemed obedient to his will, soon wafted him to the English shores; and he hastened to the mansion of his fathers, and there, for a moment, appeared to lose, in the embraces and caresses of his sister, all memory of the past. If she before, by her infantine caresses, had gained his affection, now that the woman began to appear, she was still more attaching as a companion.

Miss Aubrey had not that winning grace which gains the gaze and applause of the drawing-room assemblies. There was none of that light brilliancy which only exists in the heated atmosphere of a crowded apartment. Her blue eye was never lit up by the levity of the mind beneath. There was a melancholy charm about it which did not seem to arise from misfortune, but from some feeling within, that appeared to indicate a soul conscious of a brighter realm. Her step was not that light footing, which strays where'er a butterfly or a colour may attract — it was sedate and pensive. When alone, her face was never brightened by the smile of joy; but when her brother breathed to her his affection, and would in her presence forget those



griefs she knew destroyed his rest, who would have exchanged her smile for that of the voluptuary? It seemed as if those eyes, — that face were then playing in the light of their own native sphere. She was yet only eighteen, and had not been presented to the world, it having been thought by her guardians more fit that her presentation should be delayed until her brother's return from the continent, when he might be her protector. It was now, therefore, resolved that the next drawing-room, which was fast approaching, should be the epoch of her entry into the "busy scene." Aubrey would rather have remained in the mansion of his fathers, and fed upon the melancholy which overpowered him. He could not feel interest about the frivolities of fashionable strangers, when his mind had been so torn by the events he had witnessed; but he determined to sacrifice his own comfort to the protection of his sister. They soon arrived in town, and prepared for the next day, which had been announced as a drawing-room.

The crowd was excessive — a drawing-room had not been held for a long time, and all who were anxious to bask in the smile of royalty, hastened thither. Aubrey was there with his sister. While he was standing in a corner by himself, heedless of all around him, engaged



in the remembrance that the first time he had seen Lord Ruthven was in that very place — he felt himself suddenly seized by the arm, and a voice he recognized too well, sounded in his ear — «Remember your oath. «He had hardly courage to turn, fearful of seeing a spectre that would blast him, when he perceived, at a little distance, the same figure which had attracted his notice on this spot upon his first entry into society. He gazed till his limbs almost refusing to bear their weight, he was obliged to take the arm of a friend, and forcing a passage through the crowd, he threw himself into his carriage, and was driven home. He paced the room with hurried steps, and fixed his hands upon his head, as if he were afraid his thoughts were bursting from his brain. Lord Ruthven again before him — circumstances started up in dreadful array — the dagger — his oath. — He roused himself, he could not believe it possible — the dead rise again! — He thought his imagination had conjured up the image his mind was resting upon. It was impossible that it could be real — he determined, therefore, to go again into society; for though he attempted to ask concerning Lord Ruthven, the name hung upon his lips, and he could not succeed in gaining information. He went a few nights after with his sister to the assembly of a near relation. Leaving



her under the protection of a matron, he retired into a recess, and there gave himself up to his own devouring thoughts. Perceiving, at last, that many were leaving, he roused himself, and entering another room, found his sister surrounded by several, apparently in earnest conversation; he attempted to pass and get near her, when one, whom he requested to move, turned round, and revealed to him those features he most abhorred. He sprang forward, seized his sister's arm, and, with hurried step, forced her towards the street: at the door he found himself impeded by the crowd of servants who were waiting for their lords; and while he was engaged in passing them, he again heard that voice whisper close to him — "Remember your oath!" — He did not dare to turn, but, hurrying his sister, soon reached home.

Aubrey became almost distracted. If before his mind had been absorbed by one subject, how much more completely was it engrossed, now that the certainty of the monster's living again pressed upon his thoughts. His sister's attentions were now unheeded, and it was in vain that she intreated him to explain to her what had caused his abrupt conduct. He only uttered a few words, and those terrified her. The more he thought, the more he was bewildered. His oath startled him; — was he then



to allow this monster to roam, bearing ruin upon his breath, amidst all he held dear, and not avert its progress? His very sister might have been touched by him. But even if he were to break his oath, and disclose his suspicions, who would believe him? He thought of employing his own hand to free the world from such a wretch; but death, he remembered, had been already mocked. For days he remained in this state; shut up in his room, he saw no one, and eat only when his sister came, who, with eyes streaming with tears, besought him, for her sake, to support nature. At last, no longer capable of bearing stillness and solitude, he left his house, roamed from street to street, anxious to fly that image which haunted him. His dress became neglected, and he wandered, as often exposed to the noon-day sun as to the midnight damps. He was no longer to be recognized; at first he returned with the evening to the house; but at last he laid him down to rest wherever fatigue overtook him. His sister, anxious for his safety, employed people to follow him; but they were soon distanced by him who fled from a pursuer swifter than any — from thought. His conduct, however, suddenly changed. Struck with the idea that he left by his absence the whole of his friends, with a fiend amongst them, of whose presence they



were unconscious, he determined to enter again into society, and watch him closely, anxious to forewarn, in spite of his oath, all whom Lord Ruthven approached with intimacy. But when he entered into a room, his haggard and suspicious looks were so striking, his inward shudderings so visible, that his sister was at last obliged to beg of him to abstain from seeking, for her sake, a society which affected him so strongly. When, however, remonstrance proved unavailing, the guardians thought proper to interpose, and, fearing that his mind was becoming alienated, they thought it high time to resume again that trust which had been before imposed upon them by Aubrey's parents.

Desirous of saving him from the injuries and sufferings he had daily encountered in his wanderings, and of preventing him from exposing to the general eye those marks of what they considered folly, they engaged a physican to reside in the house, and take constant care of him. He hardly appeared to notice it, so completely was his mind absorbed by one terrible subject. His incoherence became at last so great, that he was confined to his chamber. There he would often live for days, incapable of being roused. He had become emaciated, his eyes had attained a glassy lustre; — the only sign of affection and recollection remaining displayed



itself upon the entry of his sister; then he would sometimes start, and, seizing her hands, with looks that severely afflicted her, he would desire her not to touch him. "Oh, do not touch him — if your love for me is aught, do not go near him!" When, however, she inquired to whom he referred, his only answer was, "True! true!" and again he sank into a state, whence not even she could rouse him. This lasted many months: gradually, however, as the year was passing, his incoherences became less frequent, and his mind threw off a portion of its gloom, whilst his guardians observed, that several times in the day he would count upon his fingers a definite number, and then smile.

The time had nearly elapsed, when, upon the last day of the year, one of his guardians entering his room, began to converse with his physician upon the melancholy circumstance of Aubrey's being in so awful a situation, when his sister was going next day to be married. Instantly Aubrey's attention was attracted; he asked anxiously to whom. Glad of this mark of returning intellect, of which they feared he had been deprived, they mentioned the name of the Earl of Marsden. Thinking this was a young Earl whom he had met with in society, Aubrey seemed pleased, and astonished them still more by his expressing his intention to be



present at the nuptials, and desiring to see his sister. They answered not, but in a few minutes his sister was with him. He was apparently again capable of being affected by the influence of her lovely smile; for he pressed her to his breast, and kissed her cheek, wet with tears, flowing at the thought of her brother's being once more alive to the feelings of affection. He began to speak with all his wonted warmth, and to congratulate her upon her marriage with a person so distinguished for rank and every accomplishment; when he suddenly perceived a locket upon her breast; opening it, what was his surprise at beholding the features of the monster who had so long influenced his life. He seized the portrait in a paroxysm of rage, and trampled it under foot. Upon her asking him why he thus destroyed the resemblance of her future husband, he looked as if he did not understand her — then seizing her hands, and gazing on her with a frantic expression of countenance, he bade her swear that she would never wed this monster, for he — But he could not advance — it seemed as if that voice again bade him remember his oath — he turned suddenly round, thinking Lord Ruthven was near him but saw no one. In the meantime the guardians and physician, who had heard the whole, and thought this was but a return of his disorder, entered, and forcing



him from Miss Aubrey, desired her to leave him. He fell upon his knees to them, he implored, he begged of them to delay but for one day. They, attributing this to the insanity they imagined had taken possession of his mind, endeavoured to pacify him, and retired.

Lord Ruthven had called the morning after the drawing-room, and had been refused with every one else. When he heard of Aubrey's ill health, he readily understood himself to be the cause of it; but when he learned that he was deemed insane, his exultation and pleasure could hardly be concealed from those among whom he had gained this information. He hastened to the house of his former companion, and, by constant attendance, and the pretence of great affection for the brother and interest in his fate, he gradually won the ear of Miss Aubrey. Who could resist his power? His tongue had dangers and toils to recount — could speak of himself as of an individual having no sympathy with any being on the crowded earth, save with her to whom he addressed himself; — could tell how, since he knew her, his existence had begun to seem worthy of preservation, if it were merely that he might listen to her soothing accents; — in fine, he knew so well how to use the serpent's art, or such was the will of fate, that he gained her affections. The title of the elder branch falling at length to him, he ob-



tained an important embassy, which served as an excuse for hastening the marriage, (in spite of her brother's deranged state,) which was to take place the very day before his departure for the continent.

Aubrey, when he was left by the physician and his guardians, attempted to bribe the servants, but in vain. He asked for pen and paper; it was given him; he wrote a letter to his sister, conjuring her, as she valued her own happiness, her own honour, and the honour of those now in the grave, who once held her in their arms as their hope and the hope of their house, to delay but for a few hours that marriage, on which he denounced the most heavy curses. The servants promised they would deliver it; but giving it to the physician, he thought it better not to harass any more the mind of Miss Aubrey by, what he considered, the ravings of a maniac. Night passed on without rest to the busy inmates of the house; and Aubrey heard, with a horror that may more easily be conceived than described, the notes of busy preparation. Morning came, and the sound of carriages broke upon his ear. Aubrey grew almost frantic. The curiosity of the servants at last overcame their vigilance, they gradually stole away, leaving him in the custody of an helpless old woman. He seized the opportunity, with one bound was out of the room.



and in a moment found himself in the apartment where all were nearly assembled.— Lord Ruthven was the first to perceive him: he immediately approached, and, taking his arm by force, hurried him from the room, speechless with rage. When on the staircase, Lord Ruthven whispered in his ear — “Remember your oath, and know, if not my bride to day, your sister is dishonoured. Women are frail!” So saying, he pushed him towards his attendants, who, roused by the old woman, had come in search of him. Aubrey could no longer support himself; his rage not finding vent, had broken a blood-vessel, and he was conveyed to bed. This was not mentioned to his sister, who was not present when he entered, as the physician was afraid of agitating her. The marriage was solemnized, and the bride and bridegroom left London.

Aubrey’s weakness increased; the effusion of blood produced symptoms of the near approach of death. He desired his sister’s guardians might be called, and when the midnight hour had struck, he related composedly what the reader has perused — he died immediately after.

The guardians hastened to protect Miss Aubrey; but when they arrived, it was too late. Lord Ruthven had disappeared, and Aubrey’s sister had glutted the thirst of a VAMPIRE!

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EXTRACT OF A LETTER,  
CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT  
OF  
LORD BYRON'S RESIDENCE  
IN THE  
ISLAND OF MITYLENE.



THE LIFE OF A LETTER

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT

OF LORD BYRON'S RESIDENCE

IN THE

ISLAND OF MYTILINI



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ACCOUNT
OF
LORD BYRON'S RESIDENCE,
ETC.

„The world was all before him, where to choose his place of rest, and Providence his guide.”

In sailing through the Grecian Archipelago, on board one of his Majesty's vessels, in the year 1812, we put into the harbour of Mitylene, in the island of that name. The beauty of this place, and the certain supply of cattle and vegetables always to be had there, induce many British vessels to visit it — both men of war and merchantmen; and though it lies rather out of the track for ships bound to Smyrna, its bounties amply repay for the deviation of a voyage. We landed, as usual, at the bottom of the bay, and whilst the men were employed in

watering, and the purser bargaining for cattle with the natives, the clergyman and myself took a ramble to the cave called Homer's School, and other places, where we had been before. On the brow of Mount Ida (a small monticule so named) we met with and engaged a young Greek as our guide, who told us he had come from Scio with an English lord, who left the island four days previous to our arrival in his felucca. "He engaged me as a pilot," said the Greek, "and would have taken me with him; but I did not choose to quit Mitylene, where I am likely to get married. He was an odd, but a very good man. The cottage over the hill, facing the river, belongs to him, and he has left an old man in charge of it: he gave Dominick, the wine-trader, six hundred zechines for it, (about 250*l.* English currency,) and has resided there about fourteen months, though not constantly; for he sails in his felucca very often to the different islands."

This account excited our curiosity very much, and we lost no time in hastening to the house where our countryman had resided. We were kindly received by an old man, who conducted us over the mansion. It consisted of four apartments on the groundfloor — an entrance hall, a drawing-room, a sitting parlour, and a bedroom, with a spacious closet annexed. They

were all simply decorated: plain green-stained walls, marble tables on either side, a large myrtle in the centre, and a small fountain beneath, which could be made to play through the branches by moving a spring fixed in the side of a small bronze Venus in a leaning posture; a large couch or sofa completed the furniture. In the hall stood half a dozen English cane chairs, and an empty book-case: there were no mirrors, nor a single painting. The bedchamber had merely a large mattress spread on the floor, with two stuffed cotton quilts and a pillow — the common bed throughout Greece. In the sitting-room we observed a marble recess, formerly, the old man told us, filled with books and papers, which were then in a large seaman's chest in the closet: it was open, but we did not think ourselves justified in examining the contents. On the tablet of the recess lay Voltaire's, Shakspeare's, Boileau's, and Rousseau's works complete; Volney's *Ruins of Empires*; Zimmerman, in the German language; Klopstock's *Messiah*; Kotzebue's novels; Schiller's play of the *Robbers*; Milton's *Paradise Lost*, an Italian edition, printed at Parma in 1810; several small pamphlets from the Greek press at Constantinople, much torn, but no English book of any description. Most of these books

were filled with marginal notes, written with a pencil, in Italian and Latin. The Messiah was literally scribbled all over, and marked with slips of paper, on which also were remarks.

The old man said: "The lord had been reading these books the evening before he sailed, and forgot to place them with the others; but," said he, "there they must lie until his return; for he is so particular, that were I to move one thing without orders, he would frown upon me for a week together; he is otherways very good. I once did him a service; and I have the produce of this farm for the trouble of taking care of it, except twenty zechines which I pay to an aged Armenian who resides in a small cottage in the wood, and whom the lord brought here from Adrianople; I don't know for what reason."

The appearance of the house externally was pleasing. The portico in front was fifty paces long and fourteen broad, and the fluted marble pillars with black plinths and fret-work cornices, (as it is now customary in Grecian architecture,) were considerably higher than the roof. The roof, surrounded by a light stone balustrade, was covered by a fine Turkey carpet, beneath an awning of strong coarse linen. Most of the house-tops are thus furnished, as upon them the Greeks pass their evenings in smoking,

drinking light wines, such as «lachryma christi,” eating fruit, and enjoying the evening breeze.

On the left hand as we entered the house, a small streamlet glided away, grapes, oranges and limes were clustering together on its borders, and under the shade of two large myrtle bushes, a marble seat with an ornamental wooden back was placed, on which we were told, the lord passed many of his evenings and nights till twelve o'clock, reading, writing, and talking to himself. «I suppose,” said the old man, «*praying*,” for he was very devout, and always attended our church twice a week, besides Sundays.”

The view from this seat was what may be termed «a bird's-eye view.” A line of rich vineyards led the eye to Mount Calcla, covered with olive and myrtle trees in bloom, and on the summit of which an ancient Greek temple appeared in majestic decay. A small stream issuing from the ruins descended in broken cascades, until it was lost in the woods near the mountain's base. The sea smooth as glass, and an horizon unshadowed by a single cloud, terminates the view in front; and a little on the left, through a vista of lofty chesnut and palm-trees, several small islands were distinctly observed, studding the light blue wave with spots of emerald green. I seldom enjoyed a view

more than I did this; but our enquiries were fruitless as to the name of the person who had resided in this romantic solitude: none knew his name but Dominick, his banker, who had gone to Candia. "The Armenian," said our conductor, "could tell, but I am sure he will not." — "And cannot you tell, old friend?" said I — "If I can," said he, "I dare not." We had not time to visit the Armenian, but on our return to the town we learnt several particulars of the isolated lord. He had portioned eight young girls when he was last upon the island, and even *danced* with them at the nuptial feast. He gave a cow to one man, horses to others, and cotton and silk to the girls who live by weaving these articles. He also bought a new boat for a fisherman who had lost his own in a gale, and he often gave Greek Testaments to the poor children. In short, he appeared to us, from all we collected, to have been a very eccentric and benevolent character. One circumstance we learnt, which our old friend at the cottage thought proper not to disclose. He had a most beautiful daughter, with whom the lord was often seen walking on the sea-shore, and he had bought her a pianoforte, and taught her himself the use of it.

Such was the information with which we departed from the peaceful isle of Mitylene; our

imaginations all on the rack, guessing who this rambler in Greece could be. He had money it was evident: he had philanthropy of disposition, and all those eccentricities which mark peculiar genius. Arrived at Palermo, all our doubts were dispelled. Falling in company with Mr. FOSTER, the architect, a pupil of WYATT's, who had been travelling in Egypt and Greece, "The individual," said he, "about whom you are so anxious, is Lord Byron; I met him in my travels on the island of Tenedos, and I also visited him at Mitylene." We had never then heard of his lordship's fame, as we had been some years from home; but "Childe Harolde" being put into our hands we recognized the recluse of Calcla in every page. Deeply did we regret not having been more curious in our researches at the cottage, but we consoled ourselves with the idea of returning to Mitylene on some future day; but to me that day will never return. I make this statement, believing it not quite uninteresting, and in justice to his lordship's good name, which has been grossly slandered. He has been described as of an unfeeling disposition, averse to associating with human nature, or contributing in any way to sooth its sorrows, or add to its pleasures. The fact is directly the reverse, as may be plainly gathered from these little anecdotes. All the finer feelings

of the heart, so elegantly depicted in his lordship's poems, seem to have their seat in his bosom. Tenderness, sympathy, and charity appear to guide all his actions: and his courting the repose of solitude is an additional reason for marking him as a being on whose heart Religion hath set her seal, and over whose head Benevolence hath thrown her mantle. No man can read the preceding pleasing "traits" without feeling proud of him as a countryman. With respect to his loves or pleasures, I do not assume a right to give an opinion. Reports are ever to be received with caution, particularly when directed against man's moral integrity; and he who dares justify himself before that awful tribunal where all must appear, alone may censure the errors of a fellow-mortal. Lord Byron's character is worthy of his genius. To do good in secret, and shun the world's applause, is the surest testimony of a virtuous heart and selfapproving conscience.

THE END.

M A Z E P P A.

A POEM

BY LORD BYRON.

ADVERTISEMENT.

«CELUI qui remplissait alors cette place, était
«un gentilhomme Polonais, nommé Mazeppa,
«né dans le palatinat de Padolie; il avait été
«élevé page de Jean Casimir, et avait pris à sa
«cour quelque teinture des belles-lettres. Une
«intrigue qu'il eut dans sa jeunesse avec la femme
«d'un gentilhomme Polonais, ayant été décou-
«verte, le mari le fit lier tout nu sur un cheval
«farouche, et le laissa aller en cet état. Le
«cheval, qui était du pays de l'Ukraine, y re-
«tourna, et y porta Mazeppa, demi-mort de fa-
«tigue et de faim. Quelques paysans le secou-
«rurent: il resta long-tems parmi eux, et se
«signala dans plusieurs courses contre les Tar-
«tares. La supériorité de ses lumières lui donna
«une grande considération parmi les Cosaques:
«sa réputation s'augmentant de jour en jour,
«obligea le Czar à le faire Prince de l'Ukraine »—
VOLTAIRE, *Histoire de Charles XII.* p. 196.

«Le roi fuyant et poursuivi eut son cheval
«tué sous lui; le Colonel Gieta, blessé, et per-
«dant tout son sang, lui donna le sien. Ainsi
«on remit deux fois à cheval, dans la suite, ce
«conquérant qui n'avait pu y monter pendant la
«bataille.» VOLTAIRE, *Hist. de Charles XII.* p. 216.

«Le roi alla par un autre chemin avec quel-
«ques cavaliers. Le carrosse, où il était, rompit
«dans la marche; on le remit à cheval. Pour
«comble de disgrâce, il s'égara pendant la nuit
«dans un bois; là, son courage ne pouvant plus
«suppléer à ses forces épuisées, les douleurs de
«sa blessure devenues plus insupportables par la
«fatigue, son cheval étant tombé de lassitude,
«il se coucha quelques heures au pied d'un arbre,
«en danger d'être surpris à tout moment par
«les vainqueurs qui le cherchaient de tout
«côtés.» — VOLTAIRE, *Histoire de Charles XII.*
p. 218.

M A Z E P P A.

I.

'Twas after dread Pultowa's day,
When fortune left the royal Swede,
Around a slaughter'd army lay,
No more to combat and to bleed.
The power and glory of the war,
Faithless as their vain votaries, men,
Had pass'd to the triumphant Czar,
And Moscow's walls were safe again,
Until a day more dark and drear,
And a more memorable year, 10
Should give to slaughter and to shame
A mightier host and haughtier name;
A greater wreck, a deeper fall,
A shock to one — a thunderbolt to all.

And made, in this extreme of ill,
His pangs the vassals of his will;
All silent and subdued were they,
As once the nations round him lay

III.

A band of chiefs! — alas! how few,
Since but the fleeting of a day
Had thinn'd it; but this wreck was true
And chivalrous; upon the clay
Each sate him down, all sad and mute,
Beside his monarch and his steed, 50
For danger levels man and brute,
And all are fellows in their need.
Among the rest, Mazeppa made
His pillow in an old oak's shade —
Himself as rough, and scarce less old,
The Ukraine's hetman, calm and bold;
But first, outspent with this long course,
The Cossack prince rubb'd down his horse,
And made for him a leafy bed,
And smooth'd his fetlocks and his mane, 60
And slack'd his girth, and stripp'd his rein,
And joy'd to see how well he fed;
For until now he had the dread
His wearied courser might refuse
To browse beneath the midnight dews:

But he was hardy as his lord,
And little cared for bed and board;
But spirited and docile too;
Whate'er was to be done, would do.
Shaggy and swift, and strong of limb, 70
All Tartar-like he carried him;
Obey'd his voice, and came at call,
And knew him in the midst of all:
Though thousands were around, — and Night,
Without a star, pursued her flight, —
That steed from sunset until dawn
His chief would follow like a fawn.

IV.

This done, Mazeppa spread his cloak,
And laid his lance beneath his oak,
Felt if his arms in order good 80
The long day's march had well withstood —
If still the powder fill'd the pan,
And flints unloosen'd kept their lock —
His sabre's hilt and scabbard felt,
And whether they had chafed his belt —
And next the venerable man,
From out his haversack and can,
Prepared and spread his slender stock;
And to the monarch and his men
The whole or portion offer'd then 90

With far less of inquietude
Than courtiers at a banquet would.
And Charles of this his slender share
With smiles partook a moment there,
To force of cheer a greater show,
And seem above both wounds and woe; —
And then he said — «Of all our band,
«Though firm of heart and strong of hand,
«In skirmish, march, or forage, none
«Can less have said or more have done 100
«Than thee, Mazeppa! On the earth
«So fit a pair had never birth,
«Since Alexander's days till now,
«As thy Bucephalus and thou:
«All Scythia's fame to thine should yield
«For pricking on o'er flood and field.»
Mazeppa answer'd — «Ill betide
«The school wherein I learn'd to ride!»
Quoth Charles — «Old Hetman, wherefore so,
«Since thou hast learn'd the art so well?» 110
Mazeppa said — «'Twere long to tell;
«And we have many a league to go
«With every now and then a blow,
«And ten to one at least the foe,
«Before our steeds may graze at ease
«Beyond the swift Borysthenes:
«And, sire, your limbs have need of rest,
«And I will be the sentinel
«Of this your troop.» — «But I request,"

Said Sweden's monarch, «thou wilt tell 120
«This tale of thine, and I may reap,
«Perchance, from this the boon of sleep,
«For at this moment from my eyes
«The hope of present slumber flies.»

«Well, sire, with such a hope, I'll track
«My seventy years of memory back:
«I think 'twas in my twentieth spring, —
«Ay, 'twas, — when Casimir was king —
«John Casimir, — I was his page
«Six summers in my earlier age: 130
«A learned monarch, faith! was he,
«And most unlike your majesty:
«He made no wars, and did not gain
«New realms to lose them back again;
«And (save debates in Warsaw's diet)
«He reign'd in most unseemly quiet;
«Not that he had no cares to vex,
«He loved the muses and the sex;
«And sometimes these so forward are,
«They made him wish himself at war; 140
«But soon his wrath being o'er, he took
«Another mistress, or new book:
«And then he gave prodigious fêtes —
«All Warsaw gather'd round his gates
«To gaze upon his splendid court,
«And dames, and chiefs, of princely port:
«He was the Polish Solomon,

„So sung his poets, all but one,
 „Who, being unpension'd, made a satire,
 „And boasted that he could not flatter. 150
 „It was a court of jousts and mimes,
 „Where every courtier tried at rhymes;
 „Even I for once produced some verses,
 „And sign'd my odes Despairing Thirsis.
 „There was a certain Palatine,
 „A count of far and high descent,
 „Rich as a salt or silver mine;*)
 „And he was proud, ye may divine,
 „As if from heaven he had been sent:
 „He had such wealth in blood and ore 160
 „As few could match beneath the throne;
 „And he would gaze upon his store,
 „And o'er his pedigree would pore,
 „Until by some confusion led,
 „Which almost look'd like want of head,
 „He thought their merits were his own.
 „His wife was not of his opinion —
 „His junior she by thirty years —
 „Grew daily tired of his dominion;
 „And, after wishes hopes, and fears, 170
 „To virtue a few farewell tears,

*) This comparison of a „salt mine” may perhaps be
 permitted to a Pole, as the wealth of the country
 consists greatly in the salt mines.

„ A restless dream or two, some glances
„ At Warsaw's youth, some songs, and dances,
„ Awaited but the usual chances,
„ Those happy accidents which render
„ The coldest dames so very tender,
„ To deck her Count with titles given,
„ 'Tis said, as passports into heaven;
„ But, strange to say, they rarely boast
„ Of these who have deserved them most. 180

V.

„ I was a goodly stripling then;
„ At seventy years I so may say,
„ That there were few, or boys or men,
„ Who, in my dawning time of day,
„ Of vassal or of knight's degree,
„ Could vie in vanities with me;
„ For I had strength, youth, gaiety,
„ A port, not like to this ye see,
„ But smooth, as all is rugged now;
„ For time, and care, and war, have plough'd 190
„ My very soul from out my brow;
„ And thus I should be disavow'd
„ By all my kind and kin, could they
„ Compare my day and yesterday;
„ This change was wrought, too, long ere age
„ Had ta'en my features for his page:

„ With years, ye know, have not declined
„ My strength, my courage, or my mind,
„ Or at this hour I should not be
„ Telling old tales beneath a tree, 200
„ With starless skies my canopy.
„ But let me on: Theresa's form —
„ Methinks it glides before me now,
„ Between me and yon chestnut's bough,
„ The memory is so quick and warm;
„ And yet I find no words to tell
„ The shape of her I loved so well:
„ She had the Asiatic eye,
 „ Such as our Turkish neighbourhood
 „ Hath mingled with our Polish blood, 210
„ Dark as above us is the sky;
„ But through it stole a tender light,
„ Like the first moonrise at midnight;
„ Large, dark, and swimming in the stream,
„ Which seem'd to melt to its own beam;
„ All love, half languor, and half fire,
„ Like saints that at the stake expire,
„ And lift their raptured looks on high,
„ As though it were a joy to die.
„ A brow like a midsummer lake, 220
 „ Transparent with the sun therein,
„ When waves no murmur dare to make,
 „ And heaven beholds her face within.
„ A cheek and lip — but why proceed?
 „ I loved her then — I love her still;

„And such as I am, love indeed
„In fierce extremes — in good and ill.
„But still we love even in our rage,
„And haunted to our very age
„With the vain shadow of the past, 230
„As is Mazeppa to the last.

VI.

„We met — we gazed — I saw, and sigh'd,
„She did not speak, and yet replied;
„There are ten thousand tones and signs
„We hear and see, but none defines —
„Involuntary sparks of thought,
„Which strive form out the heart o'erwrought,
„And form a strange intelligence,
„Alike mysterious and intense,
„Which link the burning chain that binds, 240
„Without their will, young hearts and minds;
„Conveying, at the electric wire,
„We know not how, the absorbing fire. —
„I saw, and sigh'd — in silence wept,
„And still reluctant distance kept,
„Until I was made known to her,
„And we might then and there confer
„Without suspicion — then, even then,
„I long'd, and was resolved to speak;
„But on my lips they died again, 250

„ The accents tremulous and weak,
„ Until one hour. — There is a game,
„ A frivolous and foolish play,
„ Wherewith we while away the day;
„ It is — I have forgot the name —
„ And we to this, it seems, were set,
„ By some strange chance, which I forget:
„ I reck'd not if I won or lost,
„ It was enough for me to be
„ So near to hear, and oh! to see 260
„ The being whom I loved the most. —
„ I watch'd her as a sentinel,
„ (May ours this dark night watch as well!)
„ Until I saw, and thus it was,
„ That she was pensive, nor perceived
„ Her occupation, nor was grieved
„ Nor glad to lose or gain; but still
„ Play'd on for hours, as if her will
„ Yet bound her to the place, though not
„ That hers might be the winning lot. 270
„ Then through my brain the thought did pass
„ Even as a flash of lightning there,
„ That there was something in her air
„ Which would not doom me to despair;
„ And on the thought my words broke forth,
„ All incoherent as they were —
„ Their eloquence was little worth,
„ But yet she listen'd — 'tis enough —
„ Who listens once will listen twice;

"Her heart, be sure, is not of ice,
 "And one refusal no rebuff.

VII.

"I loved, and was beloved again —
 "They tell me, Sire, you never knew
 "Those gentle frailties; if 'tis true,
 "I shorten all my joy or pain;
 "To you 'twould seem absurd as vain;
 "But all men are not born to reign,
 "Or o'er their passions, or as you
 "Thus o'er themselves and nations too.
 "I am — or rather was — a prince, 290
 "A chief of thousands, and could lead
 "Them on where each would foremost bleed;
 "But could not o'er myself evince
 "The like control — But to resume:
 "I loved, and was beloved again;
 "In sooth, it is a happy doom,
 "But yet where happiest ends in pain. —
 "We met in secret, and the hour
 "Which led me to that lady's bower
 "Was fiery Expectation's dower. 300
 "My days and nights were nothing — all
 "Except that hour, which doth recal
 "In the long lapse from youth to age
 "No other like itself — I'd give

"The Ukraine back again to live
"It o'er once more — and be a page,
"The happy page, who was the lord
"Of one soft heart, and his own sword,
"And had no other gem nor wealth
"Save nature's gift of youth and health. — 310
"We met in secret — doubly sweet,
"Some say, they find it so to meet;
"I know not that — I would have given
 "My life but to have call'd her mine
"In the full view of earth and heaven;
 "For I did oft and long repine
"That we could only meet by stealth.

VIII.

"For lovers there are many eyes,
 "And such there were on us; — the devil
 "On such occasions should be civil — 320
"The devil! — I'm loth to do him wrong,
 "It might be some untoward saint,
"Who would not be at rest too long,
 "But to his pious bile gave vent —
"But one fair night, some lurking spies
"Surprised and seized us both.
"The Count was something more than wroth —
"I was unarm'd; but if in steel,
"All cap-à-pie from head to heel,

"What 'gainst their numbers could I do? — 330
" 'Twas near his castle, far away
" From city or from succour near,
" And almost on the break of day;
" I did not think to see another,
" My moments seem'd reduced to few;
" And with one prayer to Mary Mother,
" And, it may be, a saint or two,
" As I resign'd me to my fate,
" They led me to the castle gate:
" Theresa's doom I never knew, 340
" Our lot was henceforth separate. —
" An angry man, ye may opine,
" Was he, the proud Count Palatine;
" And he had reason good to be,
" But he was most enraged lest such
" An accident should chance to touch
" Upon his future pedigree;
" Nor less amazed, that such a blot
" His noble 'scutcheon should have got,
" While he was highest of his line; 350
" Because unto himself he deem'd
" The first of men, nor less he deem'd
" In others' eyes, and most in mine.
" 'S death! with a *page* — perchance a king
" Had reconciled him to the thing;
" But with a stripling of a page —
" I felt — but cannot paint his rage.

IX.

"Bring forth the horse" — the horse was brought;
"In truth, he was a noble steed,
"A Tartar of the Ukraine breed, 360
"Who look'd as though the speed of thought
"Were in his limbs; but he was wild,
"Wild as the wild deer, and untaught,
"With spur and bridle undefiled —
"Twas but a day he had been caught;
"And snorting, with erected mane,
"And struggling fiercely, but in vain,
"In the full foam of wrath and dread
"To me the desert-born was led:
"They bound me on, that menial throng, 370
"Upon his back with many a thong;
"Then loosed him with a sudden lash —
"Away! — away! — and on we dash! —
"Torrents less rapid and less rash.

X.

"Away! away! — My breath was gone —
"I saw not where he hurried on:
"Twas scarcely yet the break of day,
"And on he foam'd — away! — away! —
"The last of human sounds which rose,

"As I was darted from my foes, 380
"Was the wild shout of savage laughter,
"Which on the wind came roaring after
"A moment from that rabble rout:
"With sudden wrath I wrench'd my head,
"And snapp'd the cord, which to the mane
"Had bound my neck in lieu of rein,
"And, writhin' half my form about,
"Howl'd back my curse; but 'midst the tread,
"The thunder of my courser's speed,
"Perchance they did not hear nor heed: 390
"It vexes me — for I would fain
"Have paid their insult back again.
"I paid it well in after days:
"There is not of that castle gate,
"Its drawbridge and portcullis' weight,
"Stone, bar, moat, bridge, or barrier left;
"Nor of its fields a blade of grass,
"Save what grows on a ridge of wall,
"Where stood the hearth-stone of the hall;
"And many a time ye there might pass, 400
"Nor dream that e'er that fortress was:
"I saw its turrets in a blaze,
"Their crackling battlements all cleft,
"And the hot lead pour down like rain
"From off the scorch'd and blackening roof,
"Whose thickness was not vengeance-proof.
"They little thought that day of pain,
"When lanch'd, as on the lightning's flash,

"They bade me to destruction dash,
"That one day I should come again, 410
"With twice five thousand horse, to thank
"The Count for his uncourteous ride.
"They play'd me then a bitter prank,
"When, with the wild horse for my guide,
"They bound me to his foaming flank:
"At length I play'd them one as frank —
"For time at last sets all things even —
"And if we do but watch the hour,
"There never yet was human power
"Which could evade, if unforgiven, 420
"The patient search and vigil long
"Of him who treasures up a wrong.

XI.

"Away, away, my steed and I,
"Upon the pinions of the wind,
"All human dwellings left behind;
"We sped like meteors through the sky,
"When with its crackling sound the night
"Is chequer'd with the northern light:
"Town — village — none were on our track,
"But a wild plain of far extent, 430
"And bounded by a forest black;
"And, save the scarce seen battlement
"On distant heights of some strong hold,
"Against the Tartars built of old,

"No trace of man. The year before
"A Turkish army had march'd o'er;
"And where the Spahi's hoof hath trod,
"The verdure flies the bloody sod: —
"The sky was dull, and dim, and gray,
"And a low breeze crept moaning by — 440
"I could have answer'd with a sigh —
"But fast we fled, away, away —
"And I could neither sigh nor pray;
"And my cold sweat-drops fell like rain
"Upon the courser's bristling mane;
"But, snorting still with rage and fear,
"He flew upon his far career:
"At times I almost thought, indeed,
"He must have slacken'd in his speed;
"But no — my bound and slender frame 450
"Was nothing to his angry might,
"And merely like a spur became:
"Each motion which I made to free
"My swoln limbs from their agony
"Increased his fury and affright:
"I tried my voice, — 'twas faint and low,
"But yet he swerved as from a blow;
"And, starting to each accent, sprang
"As from a sudden trumpet's clang:
"Meantime my cords were wet with gore, 460
"Which, oozing through my limbs, ran o'er;
"And in my tongue the thirst became
"A something fierier far than flame.

XII.

"We near'd the wild wood — 'twas so wide,
"I saw no bounds on either side;
"Twas studded with old sturdy trees,
"That bent not to the roughest breeze
"Which howls down from Siberia's waste,
"And strips the forest in its haste, —
"But these were few, and far between 470
"Set thick with shrubs more young and green,
"Luxuriant with their annual leaves,
"Ere strown by those autumnal eves
"That nip the forest's foliage dead,
"Discolour'd with a lifeless red,
"Which stands thereon like stiffen'd gore
"Upon the slain when battle's o'er,
"And some long winter's night hath shed
"Its frost o'er every tombless head,
"So cold and stark the raven's beak 480
"May peck unpierced each frozen cheek:
"Twas a wild waste of underwood,
"And here and there a chestnut stood,
"The strong oak, and the hardy pine;
"But far apart — and well it were,
"Or else a different lot were mine —
"The boughs gave way, and did not tear
"My limbs; and I found strength to bear

"My wounds, already scarr'd with cold —
"My bonds forbade to loose my hold. 490
"We rustled through the leaves like wind,
"Left shrubs, and trees, and wolves behind;
"By night I heard them on the track,
"Their troop came hard upon our back,
"With their long gallop, which can tire
"The hound's deep hate, and hunter's fire:
"Where'er we flew they follow'd on,
"Nor left us with the morning sun;
"Behind I saw them, scarce a rood,
"At day-break winding through the wood, 500
"And through the night had heard their feet
"Their stealing, rustling step repeat.
"Oh! how I wish'd for spear or sword,
"At least to die amidst the horde,
"And perish — if it must be so —
"At bay, destroying many a foe.
"When first my courser's race begun,
"I wish'd the goal already won;
"But now I doubted strength and speed.
"Vain doubt! his swift and savage breed 510
"Had nerved him like the mountain-roe;
"Nor faster falls the blinding snow
"Which whelms the peasant near the door
"Whose threshold he shall cross no more,
"Bewilder'd with the dazzling blast,
"Than through the forest-paths he past —

"Untired, untamed, and worse than wild;
"All furious as a favour'd child
"Balk'd of its wish; or fiercer still —
"A woman piqued — who has her will. 520

XIII.

"The wood was past; 'twas more than noon,
"But chill the air, although in June;
"Or it might be my veins ran cold —
"Prolong'd endurance tames the bold:
"And I was then not what I seem,
"But headlong as a wintry stream,
"And wore my feelings out before
"I well could count their causes o'er:
"And what with fury, fear, and wrath,
"The tortures which beset my path, 530
"Cold, hunger, sorrow, shame, distress,
"Thus bound in nature's nakedness:
"Sprung from a race whose rising blood
"When stirr'd beyond its calmer mood,
"And trodden hard upon, is like
"The rattle-snake's, in act to strike,
"What marvel if this worn-out trunk
"Beneath its woes a moment sunk?
"The earth gave way, the skies roll'd round,
"I seem'd to sink upon the ground; 540

"But err'd, for I was fastly bound.
"My heart turn'd sick, my brain grew sore,
"And throb'd awhile, then beat no more:
"The skies spun like a mighty wheel;
"I saw the trees like drunkards reel,
"And a slight flash sprang o'er my eyes,
"Which saw no farther: he who dies
"Can die no more than then I died.
"O'er-tortured by that ghastly ride,
"I felt the blackness come and go, 550
"And strove to wake; but could not make
"My senses climb up from below:
"I felt as on a plank at sea,
"When all the waves that dash o'er thee,
"At the same time upheave and whelm,
"And hurl thee towards a desert realm.
"My undulating life was as
"The fancied lights that flitting pass
"Our shut eyes in deep midnight, when
"Fever begins upon the brain; 560
"But soon it pass'd, with little pain,
"But a confusion worse than such:
"I own that I should deem it much,
"Dying, to feel the same again:
"And yet I do suppose we must
"Feel far more ere we turn to dust:
"No matter; I have bared my brow
"Full in Death's face — before — and now.

XIV.

"My thoughts came back; where was I? Cold,
 "And numb, and giddy: pulse by pulse 570
 "Life reassumed its lingering hold,
 "And throb by throb; till grown a pang
 "Which for a moment would convulse,
 "My blood reflow'd, though thick and chill;
 "My ear with uncouth noises rang,
 "My heart began once more to thrill;
 "My sight return'd, though dim; alas!
 "And thicken'd, as it were, with glass.
 "Methought the dash of waves was nigh;
 "There was a gleam too of the sky,
 "Studded with stars; — it is no dream; 580
 "The wild horse swims the wilder stream!
 "The bright broad river's gushing tide
 "Sweeps, winding onward, far and wide,
 "And we are half-way, struggling o'er
 "To yon unknown and silent shore.
 "The waters broke my hollow trance,
 "And with a temporary strength
 "My stiffen'd limbs were rebaptized.
 "My courser's broad breast proudly braves, 590
 "And dashes off the ascending waves
 "And onward we advance!
 "We reach the slippery shore at length,

" A haven I but little prized,
" For all behind was dark and drear,
" And all before was night and fear.
" How many hours of night or day
" In those suspended pangs I lay,
" I could not tell; I scarcely knew
" If this were human breath I drew. 600

XV.

" With glossy skin, and dripping mane,
" And reeling limbs, and reeking flank,
" The wild steed's sinewy nerves still strain
" Up the repelling bank.
" We gain the top: a boundless plain
" Spreads through the shadow of the night,
" And onward, onward, onward, seems
" Like precipices in our dreams,
" To stretch beyond the sight;
" And here and there a speck of white, 610
" Or scatter'd spot of dusky green,
" In masses broke into the light,
" As rose the moon upon my right.
" But nought distinctly seen
" In the dim waste, would indicate
" The omen of a cottage gate;
" No twinkling taper from afar
" Stood like an hospitable star;

"Not even an ignis - fatuus rose
 "To make him merry with my woes: 620
 "That very cheat had cheer'd me then!
 "Although detected, welcome still,
 "Reminding me, through every ill,
 "Of the abodes of men.

XVI.

"Onward we went — but slack and slow;
 "His savage force at length o'erspent,
 "The drooping courser, faint and low,
 "All feebly foaming went.
 "A sickly infant had had power
 "To guide him forward in that hour; 630
 "But useless all to me.
 "His new-born tameness nought avail'd,
 "My limbs were bound; my force had fail'd,
 "Perchance, had they been free.
 "With feeble effort still I tried
 "To rend the bonds so starkly tied —
 "But still it was in vain;
 "My limbs were only wrung the more,
 "And soon the idle strife gave o'er,
 "Which but prolong'd their pain: 640
 "The dizzy race seem'd almost done,
 "Although no goal was nearly won:
 "Some streaks announced the coming sun —

"How slow, alas! he came!
"Methought that mist of dawning gray
"Would never dapple into day;
"How heavily it roll'd away —
"Before the eastern flame
"Rose crimson, and deposed the stars,
"And call'd the radiance from their cars, 650
"And fill'd the earth, from his deep throne,
"With lonely lustre, all his own.

XVII.

"Up rose the sun; the mists were curl'd
"Back from the solitary world
"Which lay around — behind — before:
"What boot'd it to traverse o'er
"Plain, forest, river? Man nor brute,
"Nor dint of hoof, nor print of foot,
"Lay in the wild luxuriant soil;
"No sign of travel — none of toil; 660
"The very air was mute;
"And not an insect's shrill small horn,
"Nor matin bird's new voice was borne
"From herb nor thicket. Many a werst,
"Panting as if his heart would burst,
"The weary brute still stagger'd on;
"And still we were — or seem'd — alone:
"At length, while reeling on our way,

- "Methought I heard a courser neigh,
"From out yon tuft of blackening firs. 970
"Is it the wind those branches stirs?
"No, no! from out the forest prance
"A trampling troop; I see them come!
"In one vast squadron they advance!
"I strove to cry — my lips were dumb.
"The steeds rush on in plunging pride;
"But where are they the reins to guide?
"A thousand horse — and none to ride!
"With flowing tail, and flying mane,
"Wide nostrils — never stretch'd by pain, 680
"Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
"And feet that iron never shod,
"And flanks unscarr'd by spur or rod.
"A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
"Like waves that follow o'er the sea,
"Came thickly thundering on,
"As if our faint approach to meet;
"The sight re-nerved my courser's feet,
"A moment staggering, feebly fleet,
"A moment, with a faint low neigh, 690
"He answer'd, and then fell;
"With gasps and glazing eyes he lay,
"And reeking limbs immoveable,
"His first and last career is done!
"On came the troop — they saw him stoop,
"They saw me strangely bound along
"His back with many a bloody thong:

"They stop — they start — they snuff the air,
"Gallop a moment here and there,
"Approach, retire, wheel round and round, 700
"Then plunging back with sudden bound,
"Headed by one black mighty steed,
"Who seem'd the patriarch of his breed,
"Without a single speck or hair
"Of white upon his shaggy hide;
"They snort — they foam — neigh — swerve aside,
"And backward to the forest fly,
"By instinct, from a human eye. —
"They left me there, to my despair,
"Link'd to the dead and stiffening wretch, 710
"Whose lifeless limbs beneath me stretch,
"Relieved from that unwonted weight,
"From whence I could not extricate
"Nor him nor me — and there we lay,
"The dying on the dead!
"I little deem'd another day
"Would see my houseless, helpless head.
"And there from morn till twilight bound,
"It felt the heavy hours toil round,
"With just enough of life to see 720
"My last of suns go down on me,
"In hopeless certainty of mind,
"That makes us feel at length resign'd
"To that which our foreboding years
"Presents the worst and last of fears

- " Inevitable — even a boon,
" Nor more unkind for coming soon;
" Yet shunn'd and dreaded with such care,
" As if it only were a snare
 " That prudence might escape: 730
" At times both wish'd for and implored,
" At times sought with self-pointed sword,
" Yet still a dark and hideous close
" To even intolerable woes,
 " And welcome in no shape.
" And, strange to say, the sons of pleasure,
" They who have revell'd beyond measure
" In beauty, wassail, wine, and treasure,
" Die calm, or calmer, oft than he
" Whose heritage was misery: 740
" For he who hath in turn run through
" All that was beautiful and new,
 " Hath nought to hope, and nought to leave;
" And, save the future, (which is view'd
" Not quite as men are base or good,
" But as their nerves may be endued),
 " With nought perhaps to grieve: —
" The wretch still hopes his woes must end,
" And Death, whom he should deem his friend,
" Appears, to his distemper'd eyes, 750
" Arrived to rob him of his prize,
" The tree of his new Paradise.
" To-morrow would have given him all,
" Repaid his pangs, repair'd his fall;

" To - morrow would have been the first
" Of days no more deplored or curst,
" But bright, and long, and beckoning years,
" Seen dazzling through the mist of tears,
" Guerdon of many a painful hour;
" To - morrow would have given him power 760
" To rule, to shine, to smite, to save —
" And must it dawn upon his grave?

XVIII.

" The sun was sinking — still I lay
" Chain'd to the chill and stiffening steed,
" I thought to mingle there our clay;
" And my dim eyes of death had need,
" No hope arose of being freed:
" I cast my last looks up the sky,
" And there between me and the sun
" I saw the expecting raven fly: 770
" Who scarce would wait till both should die,
" Ere his repast begun;
" He flew, and perch'd, then flew once more,
" And each time nearer than before;
" I saw his wing through twilight flit,
" And once so near me he alit
" I could have smote, but lack'd the strength;
" But the slight motion of my hand,
" And feeble scratching of the sand,

- " The exerted throat's faint struggling noise, 780
" Which scarcely could be call'd a voice,
" Together scared him off at length. —
" I know no more — my latest dream
" Is something of a lovely star
" Which fix'd my dull eyes from afar,
" And went and came with wandering beam,
" And of the cold, dull, swimming, dense
" Sensation of recurring sense,
" And then subsiding back to death,
" And then again a little breath, 790
" A little thrill, a short suspense,
" An icy sickness curdling o'er
" My heart, and sparks that cross'd my brain —
" A gasp, a throb, a start of pain,
" A sigh, and nothing more.

XIX

- " I woke — Where was I? — Do I see
" A human face look down on me?
" And doth a roof above me close?
" Do these limbs on a couch repose?
" Is this a chamber where I lie? 800
" And is it mortal yon bright eye,
" That watches me with gentle glance?
" I closed my own again once more,
" As doubtful that the former trance
" Could not as yet be o'er.

" A slender girl, long-hair'd, and tall,
" Sate watching by the cottage wall;
" The sparkle of her eye I caught,
" Even with my first return of thought;
" For ever and anon she threw 810
" A prying, plying glance on me.
" With her black eyes so wild and free:
" I gazed, and gazed, until I knew
" No vision it could be, —
" But that I lived, and was released
" From adding to the vulture's feast:
" And when the Cossack maid beheld
" My heavy eyes at length unseal'd,
" She smiled — and I essay'd to speak,
" But fail'd — and she approach'd, and made 820
" With lip and finger signs that said,
" I must not strive as yet to break
" The silence, till my strength should be
" Enough to leave my accents free;
" And then her hand on mine she laid,
" And smooth'd the pillow for my head,
" And stole along on tiptoe tread,
" And gently oped the door, and spake
" In whispers — ne'er was voice so sweet!
" Even music follow'd her light feet: — 830
" But those she call'd were not awake,
" And she went forth; but, ere she pass'd,
" Another look on me she cast,
" Another sign she made, to say,

" That I had nought to fear, that all
 " Were near, at my command or call,
 " And she would not delay
 " Her due return: — while she was gone,
 " Methought I felt too much alone.

XX.

" She came with mother and with sire — 840
 " What need of more? — I will not tire
 " With long recital of the rest,
 " Since I became the Cossacks' guest,
 " They found me senseless on the plain —
 " They bore me to the nearest hut —
 " They brought me into life again —
 " Me — one day o'er their realm to reign!
 " Thus the vain fool who strove to glut
 " His rage, refining on my pain,
 " Sent me forth to the wilderness, 850
 " Bound, naked, bleeding, and alone,
 " To pass the desert to a throne, —
 " What mortal his own doom may guess? —
 " Let none despond, let none despair!
 " To-morrow the Borysthenes
 " May see our coursers graze at ease
 " Upon his Turkish bank, — and never
 " Had I such welcome for a river
 " As I shall yield when safely there.
 " Comrades, good night!" — The Hetman threw 860

His length beneath the oak-tree shade,
With leafy couch already made,
A bed nor comfortless nor new
To him, who took his rest whene'er
The hour arrived, no matter where: —

His eyes the hastening slumbers steep.
And if ye marvel Charles forgot
To thank his tale, *he* wonder'd not, —
The king had been an hour asleep.

O D E.

I.

Oh Venice! Venice! when thy marble walls
Are level with the waters, there shall be
A cry of nations o'er thy sunken halls,
A loud lament along the sweeping sea!
If I, a northern wanderer, weep for thee,
What should thy sons do? — any thing but weep:
And yet thy only murmur in their sleep.
In contrast with their fathers — as the slime,
The dull green ooze of the receding deep,
Is with the dashing of the spring-tide foam, 10
That drives the sailor shipless to his home,
Are they to those that were; and thus they creep,
Crouching and crab-like, through their sapping
streets.

Oh! agony — that centuries should reap
No mellowed harvest! Thirteen hundred years

Of wealth and glory turn'd to dust and tears;
And every monument the stranger meets,
Church, palace, pillar, as a mourner greets;
And even the Lion all subdued appears,
And the harsh sound of the barbarian drum, 20
With dull and daily dissonance, repeats
The echo of thy tyrant's voice along
The soft waves, once all musical to song,
That heaved beneath the moonlight with the throng
Of gondolas — and to the busy hum
Of cheerful creatures, whose most sinful deeds
Were but the overbeating of the heart,
And flow of too much happiness, which needs
The aid of age to turn its course apart
From the luxuriant and voluptuous flood 30
Of sweet sensations, battling with the blood.
But these are better than the gloomy errors,
The weeds of nations in their last decay,
When Vice walks forth with her unsoften'd terrors,
And Mirth is madness, and but smiles to slay;
And Hope is nothing but a false delay,
The sick man's lightning half an hour ere death,
When Faintness, the last mortal birth of Pain,
And apathy of limb, the dull beginning
Of the cold staggering race which Death is win-
ning, 40
Steals vein by vein and pulse by pulse away;
Yet so relieving the o'er-tortured clay,
To him appears renewal of his breath,

Ye men, who pour your blood for kings as water,
 What have they given your children in return?
 A heritage of servitude and woes,
 A blindfold bondage, where your hire is blows. 70
 What! do not yet the red-hot ploughshares burn,
 O'er which you stumble in a false ordeal,
 And deem this proof of loyalty the *real*;
 Kissing the hand that guides you to your scars,
 And glorying as you tread the glowing bars?
 All that your sires have left you, all that Time
 Bequeaths of free, and History of sublime,
 Spring from a different theme! — Ye see and read,
 Admire and sigh, and then succumb and bleed!
 Save the few spirits, who, despite of all, 80
 And worse than all, the sudden crimes engender'd
 Ey the down-thundering of the prison-wall,
 And thirst to swallow the sweet waters tender'd,
 Gushing from Freedom's fountains — when the
 crowd,

Madden'd with centuries of drought, are loud,
 And trample on each other to obtain
 The cup which brings oblivion of a chain
 Heavy and sore, — in which long yoked they
 plough'd

The sand, — or if there sprung the yellow grain,
 'Twas not for them, their necks were too much
 bow'd, 91

And their dead palates chew'd the cud of pain:—
 Yes! the few spirits — who, despite of deeds

Which they abhor, confound not with the cause
 Those momentary starts from Nature's laws,
 Which, like the pestilence and earthquake, smite
 But for a term, then pass, and leave the earth
 With all her seasons to repair the blight
 With a few summers, and again put forth
 Cities and generations — fair, when free —
 For, Tyranny, there blooms no bud for thee! 100

III.

Glory and Empire! once upon these towers
 With Freedom — godlike Triad! how ye sate!
 The league of mightiest nations, in those hours
 When Venice was an envy, might abate,
 But did not quench, her spirit — in her fate
 All were enwrapp'd: the feasted monarchs knew
 And loved their hostess, nor could learn to hate,
 Although they humbled — with the kingly few
 The many felt, for from all days and climes
 She was the voyager's worship; — even her crimes
 Were of the softer order — born of Love, 111
 She drank no blood, nor fatten'd on the dead,
 But gladden'd where her harmless conquests
 spread;
 For these restored the Cross, that from above
 Hallow'd her sheltering banners, which incessant
 Flew between earth and the unholy Crescent,

Which, if it waned and dwindled, Earth may
thank

The city it has clothed in chains, which clank
Now, creaking in the ears of those who owe
The name of Freedom to her glorious strug-
gles; 120

Yet she but shares with them a common woe,
And call'd the "kingdom" of a conquering foe, —
But knows what all — and, most of all, we know —
With what set gilded terms a tyrant juggles!

IV.

The mane of Commonwealth is past and gone
O'er the three fractions of the groaning globe;
Venice is crush'd, and Holland deigns to own
A sceptre, and endures the purple robe;
If the free Switzer yet bestrides alone
His chainless mountains, 'tis but for a time, 130
For tyranny of late is cunning grown,
And in its own good season tramples down
The sparkles of our ashes. One great clime,
Whose vigorous offspring by dividing ocean
Are kept apart and nursed in the devotion
Of Freedom, which their fathers fought for, and
Bequeath'd — a heritage of heart and hand,
And proud distinction from each other land,
Whose sons must bow them at a monarch's
motion,

As if his senseless sceptre were a wand 140
Full of the magic of exploded science —
Still one great clime, in full and free defiance,
Yet rears her crest, unconquer'd and sublime,
Above the far Atlantic! — She has taught
Her Esau-brethren that the haughty flag.
The floating fence of Albion's feeble crag.
May strike to those whose red right hands have
bought

Rights cheaply earn'd with blood. Still, still,
for ever

Better, though each man's life-blood were a river,
That it should flow, and overflow, than creep 150
Through thousand lazy channels in our veins,
Damm'd like the dull canal with locks and chains,
And moving, as a sick man in his sleep,
Three paces, and then faltering: — better be
Where the extinguish'd Spartans still are free,
In their proud charnel of Thermopylae,
Than stagnate in our marsh, — or o'er the deep
Fly, and one current to the ocean add,
One spirit to the souls our fathers had,
One freeman more, America, to thee! 160

A F R A G M E N T.

A. F. A. C. M. E. N. T.

A FRAGMENT.

June 17, 1816.

IN the year 17 —, having for some time determined on a journey through countries not hitherto much frequented by travellers, I set out, accompanied by a friend, whom I shall designate by the name of Augustus Darvell. He was a few years my elder, and a man of considerable fortune and ancient family—advantages which an extensive capacity prevented him alike from undervaluing or overrating. Some peculiar circumstances in his private history had rendered him to me an object of attention, of interest, and even of regard, which neither the reserve of his manners, nor occasional indications of an inquietude at times nearly approaching to alienation of mind, could extinguish.

I was yet young in life, which I had begun early; but my intimacy with him was of a recent date: we had been educated at the same schools and

university; but his progress through these had preceded mine, and he had been deeply initiated into what is called the world, while I was yet in my noviciate. While thus engaged, I had heard much both of his past and present life; and although in these accounts there were many and irreconcilable contradictions, I could still gather from the whole that he was a being of no common order, and one who, whatever pains he might take to avoid remark, would still be remarkable. I had cultivated his acquaintance subsequently, and endeavoured to obtain his friendship, but this last appeared to be unattainable; whatever affections he might have possessed seemed now, some to have been extinguished, and others to be concentrated: that his feelings were acute, I had sufficient opportunities of observing; for, although he could control, he could not altogether disguise them: still he had a power of giving to one passion the appearance of another in such a manner that it was difficult to define the nature of what was working within him; and the expressions of his features would vary so rapidly, though slightly, that it was useless to trace them to their sources. It was evident that he was a prey to some cureless disquiet; but whether it arose from ambition, love, remorse, grief, from one or all of these, or merely from a morbid temperament akin to disease, I could not discover: there were cir-

cumstances alleged, which might have justified the application to each of these causes; but, as I have before said, these were so contradictory and contradicted, that none could be fixed upon with accuracy. Where there is mystery, it is generally supposed that there must also be evil: I know not how this may be, but in him there certainly was the one, though I could not ascertain the extent of the other — and felt loth, as far as regarded himself, to believe in its existence. My advances were received with sufficient coldness; but I was young, and not easily discouraged, and at length succeeded in obtaining, to a certain degree, that common-place intercourse and moderate confidence of common and every day concerns, created and cemented by similarity of pursuit and frequency of meeting, which is called intimacy, or friendship, according to the ideas of him who uses those words to express them.

Darvell had already travelled extensively; and to him I had applied for information with regard to the conduct of my intended journey. It was my secret wish that he might be prevailed on to accompany me: it was also a probable hope, founded upon the shadowy restlessness which I had observed in him, and to which the animation which he appeared to feel on such subjects, and his apparent indifference to all by which he was more immediately surrounded, gave fresh strength.

This wish I first hinted, and then expressed: his answer, though I had partly expected it, gave me all the pleasure of surprise — he consented; and, after the requisite arrangements, we commenced our voyages. After journeying through various countries of the south of Europe, our attention was turned towards the East, according to our original destination; and it was in my progress through those regions that the incident occurred upon which will turn what I may have to relate.

The constitution of Darvell, which must from his appearance have been in early life more than usually robust, had been for some time gradually giving way, without the intervention of any apparent disease: he had neither cough nor hectic, yet he became daily more enfeebled: his habits were temperate, and he neither declined nor complained of fatigue, yet he was evidently wasting away: he became more and more silent and sleepless, and at length so seriously altered, that my alarm grew proportionate to what I conceived to be his danger.

We had determined, on our arrival at Smyrna, on an excursion to the ruins of Ephesus and Sardis, from which I endeavoured to dissuade him in his present state of indisposition — but in vain: there appeared to be an oppression on his mind, and a solemnity in his manner, which ill corresponded with his eagerness to proceed on what I

regarded as a mere party of pleasure, little suited to a valetudinarian; but I opposed him no longer — and in a few days we set off together, accompanied only by a serrugee and a single janizary.

We had passed halfway towards the remains of Ephesus, leaving behind us the more fertile environs of Smyrna, and were entering upon that wild and tenantless track through the marshes and defiles which lead to the few huts yet lingering over the broken columns of Diana — the roofless walls of expelled Christianity, and the still more recent but complete desolation of abandoned mosques — when the sudden and rapid illness of my companion obliged us to halt at a Turkish cemetery, the turbaned tombstones of which were the sole indication that human life had ever been a sojourner in this wilderness. The only caravansera we had seen was left some hours behind us, not a vestige of a town or even cottage was within sight or hope, and this “city of the dead” appeared to be the sole refuge for my unfortunate friend, who seemed on the verge of becoming the last of its inhabitants.

In this situation, I looked round for a place where he might most conveniently repose: — contrary to the usual aspect of Mahometan burial-grounds, the cypresses were in this few in number, and these thinly scattered over its extent: the tombstones were mostly fallen, and worn with

age: — upon one of the most considerable of these, and beneath one of the most spreading trees, Darvell supported himself, in a halfreclining posture, with great difficulty. He asked for water. I had some doubts of our being able to find any, and prepared to go in search of it with hesitating despondency — but he desired me to remain; and turning to Suleiman, our janizary, who stood by us smoking with great tranquillity, he said, «Suleiman, verbana su,» (i. e. bring some water,) and went on describing the spot where it was to be found with great minuteness, at a small well for camels, a few hundred yards to the right: the janizary obeyed. I said to Darvell, «How did you know this? — He replied, «From our situation; you must perceive that this place was once inhabited, and could not have been so without springs: I have also been here before.»

«You have been here before! — How came you never to mention this to me? and what could you be doing in a place where no one would remain a moment longer than they could help it?»

To this question I received no answer. In the mean time Suleiman returned with the water, leaving the serrugee and the horses at the fountain. The quenching of his thirst had the appearance of reviving him for a moment; and I conceived hopes of his being able to proceed, or at least to

return, and I urged the attempt. He was silent — and appeared to be collecting his spirits for an effort to speak. He began.

“This is the end of my journey, and of my life — I came here to die: but I have a request to make, a command — for such my last words must be — You will observe it?”

“Most certainly; but have better hopes.”

“I have no hopes, nor wishes, but this — conceal my death from every human being.”

“I hope there will be no occasion; that you will recover, and —”

“Peace! — it must be so: promise this.”

“I do.”

“Swear it, by all that” — He here dictated an oath of great solemnity.

“There is no occasion for this — I will observe your request; and to doubt me is —”

“It cannot be helped, — you must swear.”

I took the oath: it appeared to relieve him. He removed a seal ring from his finger, on which were some Arabic characters, and presented it to me. He proceeded —

«On the ninth day of the month, at noon precisely (what month you please, but this must be the day you must fling this ring into the salt springs which run into the Bay of Eleusis: the day after, at the same hour, you must repair to the ruins of the temple of Ceres, and wait one hour.»

«Why?»

«You will see.»

«The ninth day of the month, you say?»

«The ninth.»

As I observed that the present was the ninth day of the month, his countenance changed, and he paused. As he sate, evidently becoming more feeble, a stork, with a snake in her beak, perched upon a tombstone near us; and, without devouring her prey, appeared to be stedfastly regarding us. I know not what impelled me to drive it away, but the attempt was useless; she made a few circles in the air, and returned exactly to the same spot. Darvell pointed to it, and smiled: he spoke — I know not whether to himself or to me — but the words were only, «'Tis well!»

«What is well? what do you mean?»

«No matter : you must bury me here this evening, and exactly where that bird is now perched. «You know the rest of my injunctions.»

He then proceeded to give me several directions as to the manner in which his death might be best concealed. After these were finished, he exclaimed, «You perceive that bird?»

«Certainly.»

«And the serpent writhing in her beak?»

«Doubtless : there is nothing uncommon in it; «it is her natural prey. But it is odd that she «does not devour it.»

He smiled in a ghastly manner, and said, faintly, «It is not yet time!» As he spoke, the stork flew away. My eyes followed it for a moment, it could hardly be longer than ten might be counted. I felt Darvell's weight, as it were, increase upon my shoulder, and, turning to look upon his face, perceived that he was dead!

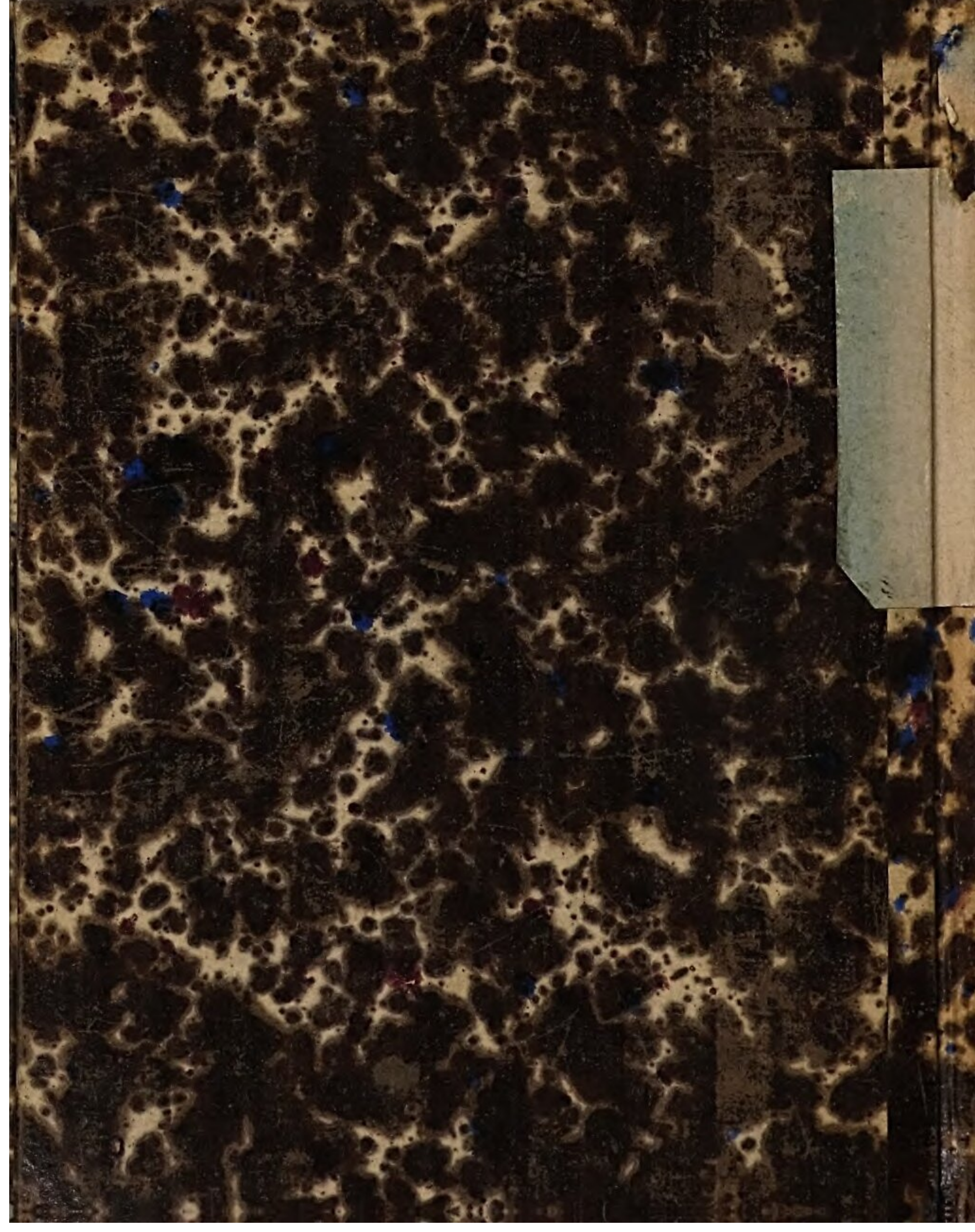
I was shocked with the sudden certainty which could not be mistaken — his countenance in a few minutes became nearly black. I should have attributed so rapid a change to poison, had I not been aware that he had no opportunity of

receiving it unperceived. The day was declining, the body was rapidly altering, and nothing remained but to fulfil his request. With the aid of Suleiman's ataghan and my own sabre, we scooped a shallow grave upon the spot which Darvell had indicated: the earth easily gave way, having already received some Mahometan tenant. We dug as deeply as the time permitted us, and throwing the dry earth upon all that remained of the singular being so lately departed, we cut a few sods of greener turf from the less withered soil around us, and laid them upon his sepulchre.

Between astonishment and grief, I was tearless.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

THE END.



Byron, George Gordon Byron

The works of the right honourable Lord Byron

Bd.: 9

Zwickau 1820

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